AN ARCHIVAL EXPLORATION
COMPARING CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS AND SHAMANS

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by
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Approval of the Dissertation

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This dissertation by Denita Benyshek has been approved by the committee members below, who recommend it be accepted by the faculty of Saybrook University in partial fulfillment of requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy in Psychology

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Abstract

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Saybrook University

Shamans and artists have been perceived as similar across a variety of dimensions. Nonetheless, these similarities have not been systematically explored and are poorly understood. This study was designed to investigate these similarities.

Stanley Krippner (personal communication, January 12, 2010) provided the initial definition of a shaman that, after minor modifications to more fully represent knowledge about shamans, became: A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention, which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members. Defining constructs were operationalized and validated cross-culturally to support multidirectional comparisons between artists and shamans using archival data from psychology, archaeology, anthropology, philosophy, art history, and creativity studies.

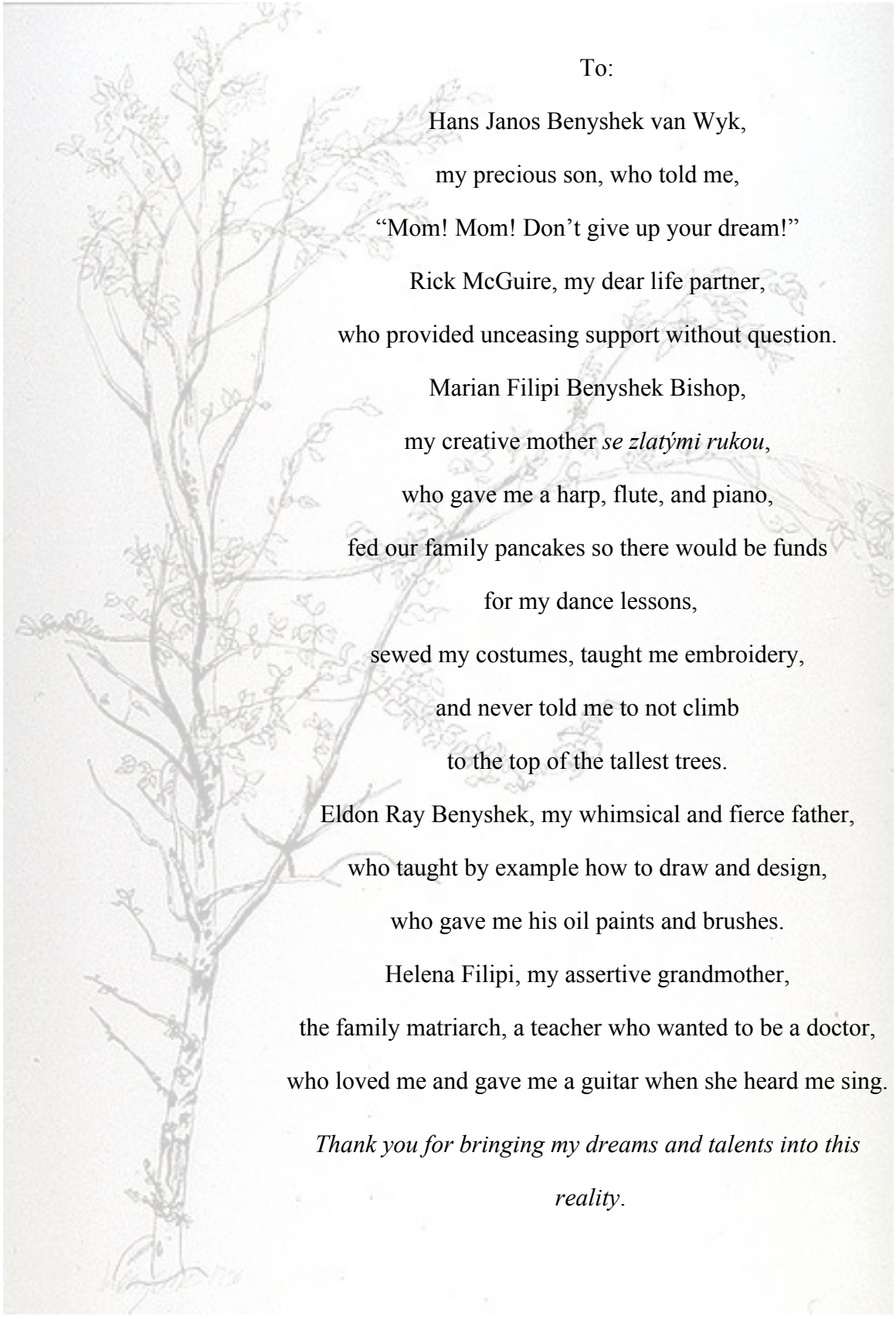
Previous publications about 24 well-known artists provided archival data for comparisons with shamans. The dimensions explored included familial influence, talent, neurological functions, calling to vocation, social support, personality, training, initiation, inspiration, positive disintegration, transliminality, imaginal realms, altered states,

purported psi experiences, mental health issues, soul retrieval, spiritual emergence, transpersonal orientation, intent to benefit, and creativity. Tables, charts, and diagrams organized archival information that, supported by descriptive comparisons, explored the nature and extent of similarities between artists and shamans. The integration of visual art, poetry, and stories provided an emic artist's perspective and alternate ways of knowing for the reader.

The study found that four artists from traditional cultures fulfilled all defining constructs of *shaman,* comprising a set of prototypical shamanic artists. In contrast, twenty artists fulfilled some, but not all, constructs defining *shaman*. These shamanlike artists were noncentral members in a fuzzy set where the shamanlike artists had family resemblances to traditional shamans and shamanic artists.

The study identified and articulated gaps in knowledge as well as establishing a broad, well-grounded theoretical model that can serve as a foundation for future research on relationships between contemporary artists and shamans, and, potentially, contribute towards transformation of art experiences in artists, art audiences, and art institutions.

Dedication



To:

Hans Janos Benyshek van Wyk,

my precious son, who told me,

“Mom! Mom! Don’t give up your dream!”

Rick McGuire, my dear life partner,

who provided unceasing support without question.

Marian Filipi Benyshek Bishop,

my creative mother *se zlatými rukou*,

who gave me a harp, flute, and piano,

fed our family pancakes so there would be funds

for my dance lessons,

sewed my costumes, taught me embroidery,

and never told me to not climb

to the top of the tallest trees.

Eldon Ray Benyshek, my whimsical and fierce father,

who taught by example how to draw and design,

who gave me his oil paints and brushes.

Helena Filipi, my assertive grandmother,

the family matriarch, a teacher who wanted to be a doctor,

who loved me and gave me a guitar when she heard me sing.

Thank you for bringing my dreams and talents into this reality.

Acknowledgments

During the process of writing this dissertation, I became more aware of the creative process as a spiritual practice. I learned to shift my attention and become a channel for "the work" as I structured, interpreted, and presented knowledge for my readers. In this way, I articulated what I knew from years of experience with the arts and formed what I discovered into this gift of research.

Yet, no one creates in isolation. Many friends, family members, professors, mentors, artists, scholars, communities, and institutions contributed directly or indirectly to the complex system and confluence of events that resulted in this study. My creative endeavors also benefitted from the cultural *Weltanschauung* of my Czech immigrant family as I migrated into the land of scholars. Even rare problematic individuals provided opportunities to strengthen my resolve, clearly identify my goals, and strengthen my focus.

I am grateful to my extraordinary dissertation committee, a triumvirate of creativity, shamanism, and humanism. Ruth Richards, M.D., Ph.D., an eminent scholar in the psychology of creativity and my mentor throughout my studies at Saybrook, served as the chair of this dissertation. Quite simply, Dr. Richards is a great teacher. She knows when and how to analyze, articulate, push, prod, guide, admonish, instruct, nurture, encourage, insist, step back, and celebrate.

Stanley Krippner, Ph.D. is an internationally known, cross-cultural scholar of shamanism. Perhaps more importantly, Dr. Krippner divines mystery wherever he is. Although he wouldn't say this, Dr. Krippner is the embodiment of shamanic being. He

devised the operationalized definition of *shaman* used herein based on his encyclopedic knowledge of shamanism.

Arthur (Art) Bohart, Ph.D., who exemplifies the values of humanistic psychology, performed a much-cited study (Bohart, 1980) on the role of catharsis, reflection, integration, and transformation in creative healing processes. He always divined my deepest intent, celebrated my rebellious artistic spirit, and never forgot to tend the fire of human experience. I consider myself extremely fortunate to attend Saybrook University during the tenure of these remarkable scholars.

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I met artist Lauren Raine, M.F.A., when we presented at the Winter Star Symposium in Ohio. When she wrote *Restoring the Balance: The Mask of Sedna* (Raine, 2009), I volunteered as her editor and became more familiar with her work. Raine also provided access to interviews she conducted with spiritually inspired artists including Alex Gray.

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My local library, the King County Library System in Washington provided librarians who hunted down obscure references, transacted interlibrary loans, found copies of rare exhibit catalogs, and mailed to me numerous hard copies of articles and book chapters – without charge.

Copyright permissions were obtained from artist Lauren Raine, Romanian photographer Robert Emilian, poet Joseph Divine Mercy Jiminez (a/k/a James Schmidt), the Library of Congress Collection of Photographs by Herta Moselsio, and the Branson DeCou Digital Archive at the Special Collections of the University Library, University of California Santa Cruz. Ruth Richards kindly allowed reproduction of a table from her

2000-2001 publication. *ReVision: A Journal of Consciousness and Transformation* (www.revisionpublishing.org) graciously allowed me to retell stories and use material from my pilot study (Benyshek, 2012) of artists as shamans. Public domain photographs and photomontage elements were found online in Wikimedia's Commons (http://commons.wikimedia.org).

All of the individuals and institutions mentioned above - and far more people than can be mentioned here - made major contributions to this study. Their values, ideas, beliefs, dreams, and work are the warp upon which the weft of my work is woven.

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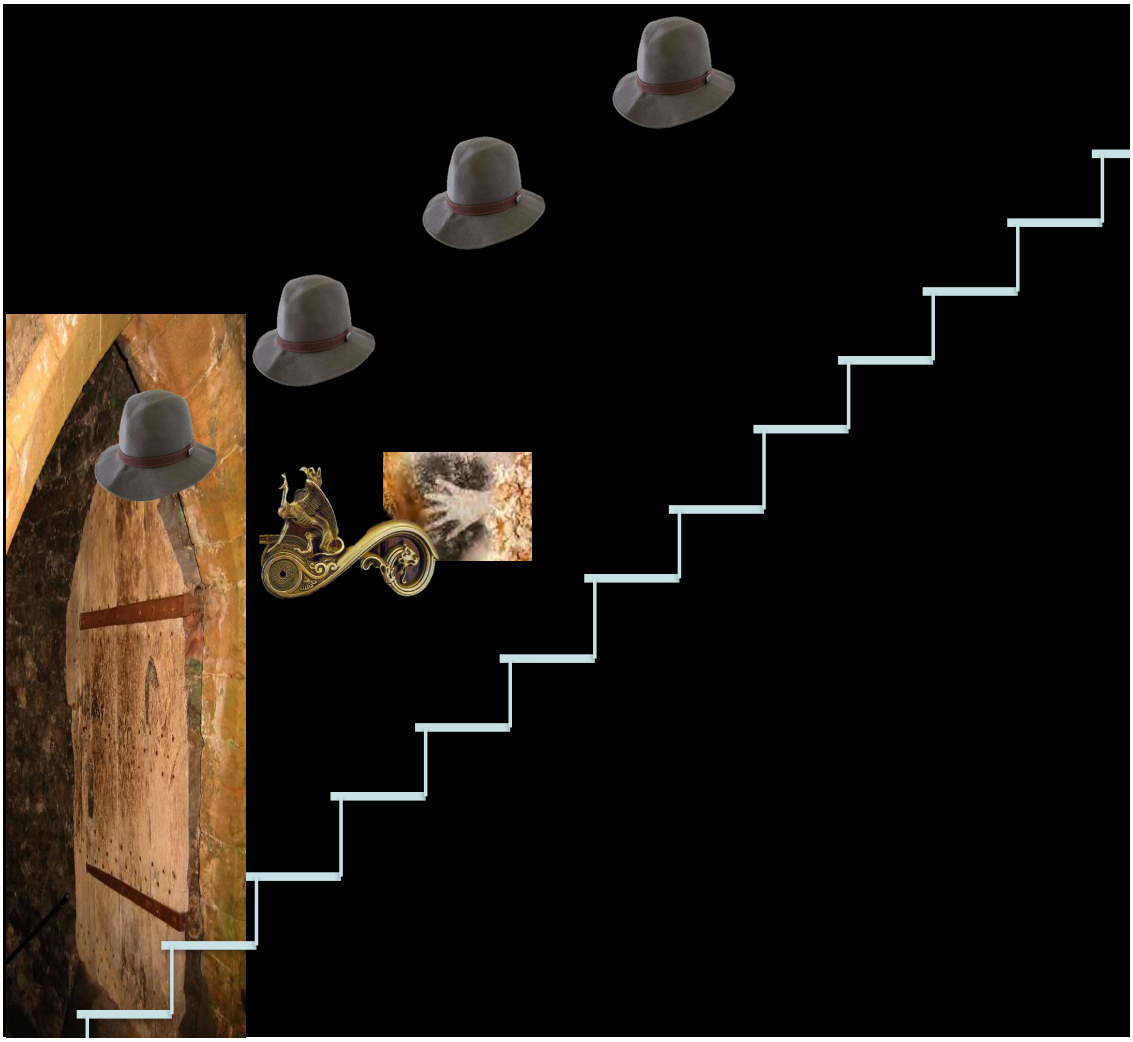


Invitation

Enter the imagination,
the in-magicked nation where
heavenly hammers and netherly nails
construct reality. Dreams stir and compose,
visions skip and thunder, following you everyday,
everywhere, until you turn and embrace each mage bearing
gifts, good or bad, black or white, until you weave a pattern, binding
both, until that image enters you, in-spirits you, and you, in gracious return,
give song to heart, path to earth, hand to plow. Join love walking through grain.

White or black, the nation is flat, no shadows, no light, no cycle, no child, no orbit,
no form,
no-one to hug in the August morn.

Put on your gray hat.
Descend the stair.
Go down.
Go deeper.
Put your hand on the latch.
Open.
Hello.

Welcome home.

In the land of images you are never alone.

Denita Benyshek, May 4, 2009

Chapter 1: Introduction

The Western imaginario, a collaborative act of cultural imagination creating and modifying ideas, concepts, and images continually across centuries within many fields of scholarship and public opinion, created a concept of shamanism (e.g., Hutton, 2001; Znamenski, 2007) in which there is a longstanding association between shamans and artists.

The prehistoric shaman, according to La Barre (1979) was:

> The original artist, dancer, musician, singer, dramatist, intellectual, poet, bard, ambassador, advisor of chiefs and kings, entertainer, actor and clown, curer, stage magician, juggler, jongleur, folksinger, weatherman, artisan, culture hero and trickster-transformer. (pp. 7-11)

Previous studies, in the fields of art history, archaeology, anthropology, mythology, and philosophy, considered the similarities between artists and shamans.

Nonetheless, in my opinion, previous studies were lacking in part due to inadequate research methods such as colonial biases, sexism, generalizing concepts from fine art onto shamanic practices, limiting considerations primarily to Western Caucasian artists, often excluding contemporary artists who are members of traditional shamanic communities, misapplying cross-disciplinary research findings, and multiple flawed research methods. Relevant data from creativity studies, a subfield of psychology, was misinterpreted and underutilized.

While the current state of research on the artist as shaman creates multiple opportunities for research, the most pressing need is for a systematic comparison of artists to shamans using a validated and operationalized definition of *shaman.* This study addressed these deficiencies, establishing an operationalized definition of *shaman* as follows:

> A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members.

The definition underwent refinement and received cross-cultural validation. Systematic and multidirectional comparisons were made between shamans, artists, and data from creativity studies. Explicit research methods, cross-disciplinary archival data, theoretical modeling, and arts-based inquiry provided answers to the primary research question: Do contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman*?

Why was answering this question important? As Heinze (1997) observed, a shaman provides important services to the community in response to psychological, social, and spiritual needs. To the extent that contemporary artists serve communities and individuals as shamans, the results of this study might enhance the ability of shamanic art to provide for the art audience's psychological, social, and spiritual needs. Potentially, results from this study could also influence many arts-engaged populations, such as artists, art institutions, and art audiences. In addition, an improved understanding of the relationships between shamans, artists, and creativity could provide a foundation for future studies of artists as shamans.

The dissertation is organized as follows:

In this chapter, after the Introduction, a few autobiographical stories explain why I undertook this research.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of studies on the artist as shaman, illustrating the historical trajectory of the topic with a critique identifying methodological weaknesses.

Chapter 3 sets out the theoretical, archival, and arts-based inquiry methods applied in this study. The primary research question is presented. Definition methods, comparison approaches, and categories from cognitive linguistics are described.

Chapter 4 defines, operationalizes, and validates major constructs in this study: art, artist, art audience, community, contemporary, creativity, psi, shaman, shamanic community, shamanic, shamanistic, shamanlike, spiritual, and soul.

Chapters 5 through 9 operationalize constructs, provide examples, and present comparisons.

Chapter 10 concludes this study, presenting results within a theoretical model that describes the relationships between shamans and contemporary artists, validates research methods. Ideas, opportunities, and recommendations for arts-engaged populations and researchers are offered. Appendix B shares suggestions for future research.

Bob Sam's Story for Researchers

During the 2009 conference of the International Society of Shamanistic Researchers, *Traditional Belief and Healing Systems in a Changing World: An Interdisciplinary Approach*, Bob (or Robert) Sam[1] (2009) performed for a large assembly primarily comprised of researchers.

Within a larger story, Sam also shared the story of how he became a storyteller, undergoing rigorous and extensive training of body and mind with a master, and, in the process, recovering from alcoholism, and transcending bitterness.

In precise choreography, Sam moved, smoothly and deliberately, across the stage in the Alaska Native Heritage Center. Slender and agile, Sam assumed the shape of

[1] After completing his apprenticeship, Sam performed and presented his work at international

different animals. His voice changed for each animal character, maintaining a steady rhythm, rising and falling melodically.

We, the audience, knew the man on stage was Bob Sam; yet, as his hypnotic voice drew us into the story, we also entered the imaginal reality of each animal he represented. Like sleeping observers of lucid dreams, we were two places at once – in the story and watching the story. Or, given how we responded to the imaginal reality of the story, the story seemed to reside within our bodies and even deeper, within our selves. Archetypes, myths, and histories were everywhere on the stage before us and on the stage within us.

Then, Sam's trance-inducing movement and voice drew the audience of anthropologists and psychologists deeper into a story that imperceptibly shape-shifted into a teaching.

As Sam concluded, he gently criticized the researchers for making conference presentations with flat voices, stiff bodies, downcast eyes, and, especially, a lack of inspiration. He noted their dependence on facts and notes. He encouraged the researchers to become more artistic in their presentations so that the information conveyed would have a more profound, far reaching effect. Sam seemed to ask: What is the value of research without passion? What is presented in presentations that lack embodied meaning, inspirited performance, and compelling artistry?

Sam's message resonated within me. As an artist who eventually learned the dance of the scholar, I continually integrate images of artwork, stories, and poems into my research papers. When I began a conference presentation for an audience of researchers, I was also a researcher. But, as the presentation progressed, the presentation changed slowly and imperceptibly into performance. My voice slowed and assumed the

hoof beat cadence of a walking horse. Through movement, I became the living illustration of the words, shifting roles as I removed a black jacket to reveal a white shirt, pulling out hair combs so that my white hair tumbled down, swaying gently side-to-side to side as I rode the white mare, and then becoming the white mare discussing methods, data, results, and conclusions.

Sam's story gave me permission to write this dissertation with embodied meaning, inspirited performance, and compelling artistry. I realized that my dissertation was not restricted to talking *about* art and artists, but that my dissertation could also *be* art. As I conducted this study, I could *create* art. Some of the art could be integrated into the dissertation and shared with you, the reader. I found additional support for integrating art with research in the newly developed method known as arts-based inquiry or arts-based research (Cole & Knowles, 2008; Finley, 2005, 2008; Leavy, 2008).

Art could become part of a multi-method research project, offering a means of analyzing, interpreting, organizing, and presenting data in tandem with more conventional methods. Arts-based research methods provide a way to obtain information, integrate art and science, bring beauty, and contribute richer meaning through research. Finley (2008) wrote:

> Arts-based research describes an epistemological foundation for human inquiry that utilizes artful ways of understanding and representing the worlds in which research is constructed…. Arts-based research makes use of diverse ways of knowing and experiencing the world. As such, the term arts-based research cannot be reduced to a prescriptive set of methods. (p. 76)

In this regard, artistic research methods are in a continual state of creation, based on beliefs, ideas, and goals. Art-based research is a means by which "the artistic sensitivities and technical (artistic) strengths of the researcher" work "in concert with the

overall spirit and purpose of the inquiry" which makes the "researcher-as-artist" an instrument of research (Cole & Knowles, 2008, p. 61).

I am an artist. I access, encounter, integrate, and validate important knowledge through the process of creating art or, as a member of the art audience, through the transformative process of relating to art. So, in response to Sam's critique of research presentations: I will now tell you a story.

The White Mare

Standing in the dark, I sense a large room around me, seemingly empty. I walk forward. A soft, white glow appears in the distance. I walk towards the light. Gradually the glow acquires the form of a white mare, muscular, with a broad breast, and ears nearly touching the high ceiling. I stretch up towards her gracefully curving neck. My hands reach her shoulder. Desire lifts me up and onto her strong back. She walks slowly forward, majestically.

We enter a long, hallway with harsh fluorescent lights, linoleum floors, and sterile white walls. Other hallways lead off right and left, but the mare continues forward, carrying me through and out of the institution.

We move through a large medieval cloister. Tall, elegant columns frame the courtyard, forming narrow arcades around a central fountain. Subtle moonlight illuminates pale stone and gently splashing water, casting deep shadows into mysterious corners.

My mare walks on, incessantly forward. Riding bareback, I feel the fluid movement of her muscles and the enormous potential of her strength. I know she belongs to me – and I to her.

We travel north, parallel to, but not upon, a narrow asphalt highway. The surrounding trees are sparse and short. We are in the tundra of Alaska. Illuminated by the midnight sun's slow flowing coral, rose, and gold, I ride.

I look through the scope between the mare's pert ears. I see gentle hills dissolving into the hazy distance. Except for the lone highway, the constructs of humanity are absent. The mare and I converse telepathically, a light chat, becoming acquainted as friends. Then, full body conviction seizes me: I must keep her with me.

How?

As a young artist in awake-reality, I did not make the traditional pilgrimage to New York City. Instead, I went the opposite direction. I wanted to create without influence from contemporary art and the coastal art scenes. I sought slowness and solitude. For 15 years, I taught visual arts, modern dance, and performance art in the Native villages of the Alaskan bush. Amidst the vast silence, far from metropolitan distractions, I traveled into the frontier of my soul. There I heard my unique, individual artist's voice. My work became my own.

I flew village to village with few possessions. When I occasionally returned to Seattle, I slept in my van and showered in friends' apartments. My patchwork quilt of income included fashion modeling and scene painting for theatres and films. I did not have a home. At this fenceless time in my life, my peripatetic existence was without stall or pasture.

In the dream, I thought. My mare cannot graze on the runways of bush planes or fashion shows. She cannot sleep in my van or travel in my suitcase. Resolving to find a home for both of us, I awake.

The Institution

A decade later, I entered a large university to earn a Masters of Fine Arts degree. In my final thesis, I described numinous personal experiences that arose during the act of painting. I used words such as enlightenment and epiphany. The painting department "head" (he was certainly not the heart!) vehemently crossed out all spiritual references with a thick, red pen. Few words of meaning survived the attack. He ordered a complete rewrite.

After the head strode away, I was defiant, "No, I won't rewrite. This censored thesis, with every red marker scar, perfectly represents my experience at this school." I gave the pen-slashed thesis to the department secretary, instructed her to place it in my file, and walked away down the long institutional hallway of harsh fluorescent lights, linoleum floors, and sterile white walls. Other hallways led off right and left, but I continued forward.

In the sanctuary of my studio, I drew a prayer to my mare protector, asking her for the strength to hold onto my genuine self. In the privacy of my journal, I proclaimed:

I am White Horse in the home of My Heart.

Calling the White Mare, Denita Benyshek, graphite on paper.

Riding on the White Horse

I entered a seminar on shamanism and sat upon a rigid chair amidst other seated students. With pen and notebook ready, I expected a didactic presentation. Instead, anthropologist Ruth-Inge Heinze instructed us to lie down and close our eyes. Upon trance-inducing drum beats, Heinze led us into visionary journeys. She encouraged us to "ride the drum."

During the fourth session of drumming, my white mare returned. Without saddle, bridle, reins, or clothing, I ride. A nude man loosely embraces me, riding behind me. Naked to joy, with throbbing drum hoof beats, we three ecstatically galloping, galloping, galloping.

Free.

We rode the white horse where the ocean meets and strokes the earth. But, galloping over the beach sands of time, we were not the only riders of the white horse.

In Siberia, the shaman's drum is oft conceived as a galloping white horse. The ethnologist Vilmos Dioszegi (1968) learned from the Karagasy

> that while shamanizing, they call the drum white horse or reindeer bull. The denominations of each part also prove that the drum represents an animal, more specifically, an animal for riding. The Soyots, for instance, call the different parts of the drum: ears, jawbones, upper rib and lower rib of the horse. (p. 260)

Following the drumming white horse, I walked through the perpetually revolving door. The glass door shattered and fell.

I kneel, carefully, laboriously, stacking and restacking the bricks of future plans. The bricks repeatedly collapse. I stand naked on the wide green prairie of my youth, beneath a broad blue sky. Picking handfuls of long-bladed grass, I put the prairie inside me, filling myself with grass. If I could not move back to the prairie, then I would move the prairie into me. I would become the prairie.

The visions gave me the confidence to walk forward into transformation. Four brief drum sessions led me beyond the charted bounds of consensual reality, rapidly back along the path of stolen dreams, opened the gate of lost hopes, ferried me across the River Styx, and out of the dark rings of unjust justice.

Drum beats transported me into golden sunlight, where wind-blown grass bowed to the distant horizon then reached up to the sky of robin's egg blue. Far beyond the bounds of talk therapy, I stepped into a land of living images, memories, and insights, and then returned to the hotel conference room with vivid memories of the visionary terrain. This realm was familiar to me, often entered and traversed during acts of artistic creativity. Maps of shamanic and artistic journeys, routes taken and visions seen, seemed to arrive at similar – if not the same – destinations.

Then, a crowd of questions, scented by fragrant prairie grasses, crossed over the threshold of my mind.

If these maps were made transparent and overlaid, to what extent would the maps be the same?

Would the layered maps reveal palimpsest trails, trails without beginning or end, of the white mare?

Where would these trails take me?

To discover the answers, I began studying research literature on relationships between artists and shamans.

To speak with an authoritative voice through the scholar's mask of expertise upon the stage of this dissertation, I now shape-shift into a scholar.

The Shamans Practice
village
OVEN
Resurrection
Portals
Door to the Universe
Home
Arch of Rain
The Source

Chapter 2: Background

This chapter describes the trajectory of thought on artists and shamanism that led to the formation of my research inquiry. The review considers multiple influences on the interpretation of artists as shamans, from mythology, iconography, ethnography, cross-cultural analogy, comparative religion, archaeology, psychology, and creativity studies that are the collaborative authors contributing to the ever modified, never finished story of shaman. Important contributions by key researchers are mentioned. Assumptions and methodological weaknesses are identified. With few exceptions, the literature is primarily drawn from Western sources printed in English. As such, the ideas are mostly productions of the "Western mind," which, as explained by Tarnas (1991) encompasses the evolving "major world views of the West's mainstream high culture, focusing on the crucial sphere of interaction between philosophy, religion, and science" (p. xiv) and, I will add, art.

The ships of history brought Europeans into contact with traditional shamanic societies. Perceptions of shamans as artists followed the colonial current, hastened by prevailing, yet slowly shifting, winds of opinion and idea. Beginning with early scientific expeditions and European exploration, viewed through terrestrial telescopes once held by captains of religion, science, philosophy, and art, then sailing into the present, the following overview charts the courses of thought linking artists and shamans.

The European Age of Exploration

In the 17th and 18th centuries, written reports often described shamanic rituals with terms and concepts borrowed from the fine arts of Europe. Etic observers noted how shamans used dance (Biet, 1664/2004; Petrovich, 1672/2004), hand properties such as

live snakes (Lafitau, 1724/2004), forms of music (Lafitau, 1724/2004) such as drumming and singing (Gmelin, 1751/2004), and costumes (Diderot, 1751-1765/2004).

Nonetheless, shamanic rituals were also dismissed as evil concourse with the devil through "diabolic invocations" (Thévet, 1557/2004), mediocre performances by cheaters (Gmelin, 1751/2004), and tricks of charlatans (Diderot, 1751-1765/2004). Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705-1783) described how a Siberian shaman howled and jumped "about senselessly" to the "din" of drumming and bells (as cited in Znamenski, 2003, p. 3). Likewise, Johann Peter Falk (1732-1774) reported that a shaman "dressed very foolishly" while performing a "farce"; yet, Falk also acknowledged the shaman's skill as a drummer (as cited in Znamenski, p. 3). While the French Jesuit missionary, Joseph François Lafitau (1681-1746), recognized the role of "deceit" (Lafitau, 1724/2004, p. 25) involved in shamanic rituals, he also honored the social service provided by shamans:

> In all the times of paganism, the diviners have been regarded as sages who had the knowledge of things divine and human, knew the efficacy of plants, stones, metals, all the occult virtues, and all the secrets of nature. Not only did they sound the depths of hearts but they foresaw the future. They read in the stars, in the books of the destinies and carried on with the gods an intimate commerce of which the rest of mankind was unworthy. Their seeming austerity of life and conventionality and the fact that they were above criticism and censure rendered them respectable to all who came to consult them as oracles and spokespeople of the divinity. (p. 22)

Romanticism

During the Romantic era, a fascination with "esoteric religions and superstitious beliefs" (Honour, 1979, p. 12) created a more welcoming and open attitude towards shamanism. The philosopher, poet, theologian, mythologist, and linguist, Johann Gottfried von Herder (1744-1803) recognized multiple roles fulfilled by traditional

shamans. Herder (1785/1785/2004; 1877-1913) described the shaman as an artist, poet, healer, musician, magician, and specialist in spirituality. He understood how the shaman's work created order out of chaos and helped organize societies (Noll, 2004) – perhaps due to similarities in some of the multifaceted roles played by shamans and by Herder.

Herder introduced an important element in the process of creativity into the discussion of shamans as artists. Herder (1785/1785/2004) believed that the nature of imagination would provide an understanding of shamanism, writing:

> Indeed, among all the forces of the human soul, imagination is perhaps the least explored: Given that it relates to the construction of the entire body, and in particular of the brain and nerves – as numerous and astonishing illnesses demonstrate – it seems therefore not only to be the link for, and the basis of, all the subtle forces of the soul but also the knot of the relationships between mind and body, as well as the budding flower of the entire organization of the senses for the other uses of the forces of thinking. (p. 37)

As information about Siberian shamans drifted west, the fine arts of Europe were profoundly influenced by a romanticized concept of shamanism, which inspired the subject matter of art, altered the self-image of artists, and influenced beliefs about how fine art functioned for the audience (Flaherty, 1992). At this point in history, there was a significant shift from considering shamans as artists to also conceiving of fine artists as shamans.

Flaherty identified themes of shamanism such as "hovering forms" and "familiar phantoms" in the dedication to *Faust* (von Goethe, 1808/1871). However, Figueira (1993) accused Flaherty of conflating shamanism with the 18th century interest in the occult. Similarly, Williams (1993) argued that Flaherty linked shamanism to "virtually anything connected with the occult." Furthermore, Williams also faulted Flaherty for

relying on “unstable” (p. 859) definitions of shaman that included synonyms such as magician or wizard. These critiques demonstrated the importance of providing a validated definition of *shaman* for the comparison of artists to shamans.

The Enlightenment

At the dawn of the French Enlightenment, in the *Encyclopédie* (Diderot & d'Alembert, 1751-1772/1713-1784), chief editor Denis Diderot (1713-1784) stated that shamans were “imposters” who performed “tricks that seemed supernatural to an ignorant and superstitious people” (p. 32). Diderot’s definition of shaman conformed to Enlightenment values of skepticism, objectivity, and rationalism. Yet, in his creative writing, Diderot also tacked towards Romanticism. According to Flaherty (1992), Diderot modeled the fictional character Lui “to represent things shamanic: acting or illusion, flights of fancy or genius, irrationality, heated enthusiasm, emotional agitation, frivolity, and androgynous childhood” (p. 127). But, after this statement, Flaherty did not explain how these characteristics exemplify shamanism.

Continuing along the same course as the Enlightenment, Thomas Paine (1736-1809) authored *The Age of Reason* (Paine, 1827). Paine rejected supernatural phenomena such as prophecies, miracles, divine inspiration, revelation, and most rituals. Nevertheless, Age of Reason deists advocated religious toleration and rational inquiry into all subjects. Thus, while suspect, the phenomena of shamanism remained worthy of investigation.

Mythology

Then, Friedrich Max Müller (1823-1900) used a cross-disciplinary, comparative method to search for the “Ur” religion – believed to be the first primeval religion. While

Müller (1870) denigrated "debased" and "idolatrous…heathens" (p. 23), Müller (1889) also encouraged a careful examination of all religions, to discover "any grains of truth that may be hidden beneath an accumulation of rubbish" (p. 571). Because shamanism was perceived as the original, primeval, universal proto-religion, mythologists began examining shamanic myths and legends to investigate this "Ur" religion.

Despite Müller's (1870, 1889) exhortations, visual art from the Upper Paleolithic era was, when initially discovered, deemed meaningless in part due to an assumption that prehistoric peoples did not have religious beliefs or practices (Eshleman, 2003). When Marcelino Sanz de Sautuola (1831-1888) shared his conclusions about the polychrome painted ceiling of Alta Mira at the 1880 Prehistoric Congress, archaeologists accused the amateur Sautuola of forgery because of the overriding belief that prehistoric peoples were not capable of creating such talented and sophisticated artwork (Bahn & Vertut, 1997, p. 18).

Soon thereafter, James George Frazer (1854-1941), mythologist and exponent of comparative religion, considered evolutionary stages of magic, myth, ritual, religion, and science in *The Golden Bough* (1900). Frazer "recognized the basic similarities of the human mind, not as a rhetorical statement of human equality, but as a principal to be used in his work" (McIlwraith, 1956, p. 70). Reasoning that the human mind was basically the same, regardless of time or place, Frazer believed that knowledge of prehistoric cultures could be gained by examining living societies at the same level of technological sophistication.

Although French poststructuralists later deemed some of Frazer's facts and conclusions unsound, *The Golden Bough* treated "magic and religion with scientific

neutrality" from a perspective of "multicultural sympathy" (Paglia, 1999), without the cultural and religious biases evident in earlier reports of shamanism (e.g., Gmelin, 1751/2004; Thévet, 1557/2004). In neutral descriptions, Frazer discussed shamanism and repeatedly referred to magic as an art form.

Art played a magical role when "the rude hunter or fisherman" (Frazer, 1900, p. 23) used homeopathic or imitative magic, a kind of "sympathetic magic" (p. 11) based on "the principle that like produces like" (p. 23). Frazer provided examples of how Australian aborigines used pantomime, song, painting, and costume in rituals intended to multiply food sources. Frazer described similar goals and acts performed by First Peoples in British Columbia who fashioned magical charms to insure success at the hunt. For this purpose, a "Nootka wizard" (p. 23) submerged a sculpted swimming fish and prayed, calling in the tribe's major food source.

Early Interpretations of Cave Art

Eventually, after multiple discoveries of art in the caves of France and Spain, archaeologists accepted the ability of Paleolithic peoples to create extraordinary art. Frazer's (1900) nonbiased explanation of sympathetic magic and his nonhierarchical view of the human mind strongly influenced how prehistorian Emile Cartailhac (1845-1921) and polymath Henri Breuil (1877-1961) interpreted cave art. Through a research method now known as cross-cultural analogy, Cartailhac and Breuil (1906) compared prehistoric cave art with contemporary Stone Age societies living in Africa, Australia, and North America.

Quite simply, cross-cultural analogy assumes that if *x*, *y*, and *z* are true in a contemporary society at a certain level of technological development, then *x*, *y*, and *z* are

also true in a systadial (i.e., same technological evolutionary stage) prehistoric society. Childe (1944/2004), a social archaeologist, explained that if a prehistoric society had certain kinds of technology and a certain kind of economy, then "we can treat it as a systadial with a contemporary society, similarly equipped and organized" (p. 77). Childe explained systadial cultures as "cultures occupying the same relative position in the sequence as defined by the common criterion of technology" (p. 77) about which "We might expect a considerable, but certainly not an exact correspondence between the superstitions and institutions of the two groups…." (p. 77).

Inspired by Frazer's reports regarding the practice of sympathetic magic, Capitan, Breuil, and Peyrony (1903) employed cross-cultural comparisons between systadial societies and concluded that sympathetic magic could be a purpose of prehistoric cave art, magically creating power to control animals. Breuil (1952) also believed that cave art served as backdrops for dances to bring luck in hunting, as educational aids to teach the art of hunting, as targets for hunting practice, and as fertility magic insuring the survival of major food sources.

However, according to Eshleman (2003), "There are no verifiable hunting scenes in Upper Paleolithic art. Very few of the animals depicted are wounded and we are not sure that such signs actually depict wounds and/or spears" (p. 126). Based on the existence of plentiful game at the time the cave art was created, as well as a lack of verification that cave art mares or "Venus" statuettes of women are pregnant, Eshleman also argued against Breuil's fertility magic theories. Kleiner (2009) noted that most of Breuil's "theories have been discredited over time, and most prehistorians admit that no one knows the intent of these representations" (p. 21).

Women: Earliest Shamans and Artists?

Another inaccuracy exists in the assumptions made by Cartailhac and Breuil (1906). Perhaps reflecting how eminent European artists were almost exclusively male, Cartailhac and Breuil referred to the cave artists as male, not only through masculine pronouns but also through specific comments, blindly imposing the androcentric bias of their society. The assumption that cave artists were male extended through almost a century of publications despite reports of female shamans in Russian journals of anthropology.

In 1910, after studying the Chukchi people of northeastern Siberia, Bogoras observed that archaic forms of shamanism were the most egalitarian. He found that all Chukchi adults could perform shamanic rituals and tasks, with women given roles of leadership (as cited in Znamenski, 2003). Khagalov, in his 1916 manuscript, expressed his belief in the matriarchal foundation of shamanism based, in part, on legends from the northernmost Mongol people, the Buryat (as cited in Znamenski). Their supreme deity ordered an eagle to give power to a woman who becomes the first shaman. Because shamans utilize several forms of art in their rituals, the Buryat's first shaman was also considered their first artist. Moreover, several Buryat communities believed their supreme deity was a goddess who also served as the patron of shamanic initiation (Khagalov as cited in Znamenski). Clearly, androcentric interpretations of Paleolithic cave painting were in error.

Archaeological discoveries also indicated that women probably served as early shamans and there is additional evidence of female shamans creating some, if not most, of the earliest forms of art. An excavation at Dolní Věstonice, in the present Czech

Republic, unearthed the oldest known grave of a shaman. The red ochre painted body was buried beneath mammoth scapulae, holding a fox (believed to be an attribute of shamans in that region) with a flint spearhead near the skull – objects thought to be attributes of prehistoric shamans. Analysis of the skeleton discovered that the shaman was from a female who lived during the Upper Paleolithic era, 60,000 B.C.E.. The same site provided the grave of a second female also assumed to be a shaman.

Eventually, the archaeological team discovered a nearby lodge with bone flutes and almost 3,000 pieces of clay baked in an oven, some formed into animals or human heads, feet, or hands. None of the forms appeared to serve utilitarian functions as household utensils (B. Tedlock, 2005) and many of the pieces were fragments resulting from deliberately induced explosions through thermal shock (Vandiver, Soffer, Klima, & Svoboda, 1989).

Although the beliefs and goals underlying the purposeful explosions remain unknown, the flutes and clay forms represent the earliest known indications of shamanic art: what European American culture now terms music and sculpture. However, the creation of these forms as *l'art pour l'art* (Cousin, 1818), as art purely for the sake of art, is highly unlikely. Fine art, as a concept, was not yet invented. Moreover, the kilns of Dolní Věstonice were atypically located, away from the community's general settlement, which hints at a possible magical, ritual purpose for the clay forms (Vandiver et al., 1989).

Also relative to the issue of women as early artists and, perhaps, shamans is the analysis of hand stencils and finger fluting in several caves. Van Gelder and Sharp (2009) used forensic methods to analyze graphic forms, known as finger fluting, in the

Rouffignac cave in France. Women made five of the seven graphic patterns. Snow (National Geographic, 2009) analyzed hand stencils in the Peche Merle and Gargas caves of France as well as the El Castillo cave in Spain. Snow compared the proportions of the hands, including relative finger length, to people of European descent. Snow found that most of the stenciled hands were female. He then assumed that these women were also responsible for creating paintings located next to the hand shapes, "We don't know what the roles of artists were in Upper Paleolithic society…generally, but it's a step forward to be able to say that a strong majority of them were women" (para. 2).

Discovery of the female shaman graves plus analysis of the finger flutings and hand stencils call into question the numerous interpretations of prehistoric art formulated from an androcentric bias. Therefore, interpretations of prehistoric art that refer solely to activities performed primarily by men, such as hunting, are also questionable. Indeed, women appear to have played important roles in the spiritual and cultural lives of their prehistoric communities.

Depictions of Shamans

Shamans are not only presumed to be the creators of cave art (e.g., Breuil, 1952; Clottes & Lewis-Williams, 1998; Whitley, 2009), but are also thought to be the subject matter of cave art. A drawing of a human-animal composite or hybrid figure with a tail and antlers, widely assumed to represent a shaman, was found in the Cave of the Trois-Frères located in present day France. The figure was initially dubbed "The God of *Les Trois Frères,*" then later known as "The Sorcerer." Stone (2003) described The Sorcerer as "a strange creature, a composite of human, owl, lion, stag, wolf, and horse. The figure also appears to have part of its skeleton superimposed" (pp. 125-126).

Breuil made a drawing of The Sorcerer *in situ.* Breuil's drawing was initially reproduced in a 1920 publication (Bégouën & Breuil). In 1957, based on Breuil's drawing, James identified the *Les Trois Frères* composite figure as a shaman. This marks the first identification of a shaman as the subject of a Paleolithic artwork. In his argument, James (1957) cited *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy* (Eliade, 1951/1964) a book written by the historian of religion, novelist, and philosopher Mircea Eliade (1907-1986).

Eliade (1951/1964) described elaborate costumes of shamans that resembled a duck or a reindeer, with ribbons and pelts symbolizing snakes, metal forms representing skeletal bones, a cap shaped like a lynx, a cap with antlers, explicit drawings of sexual organs, images of mythical beasts, boots resembling bird claws, wings to aid flight, and a staff with a horse's head (pp. 145-157).

While functioning symbolically, with feathers representing a shaman's ability to ascend in shamanic flight (Eliade, 1951/1964, p. 167), costume images and materials also referred to a shaman's ability to shape-shift, "the alteration in form or substance of any animate object" (Carse, 1987, p. 225). There is a report of one Malayan shaman who became a tiger (Skeat as cited in Eliade, 1951/1964, p. 345) and "ran on all fours, roared, and licked the patient's body for a long time as a tigress licks her cubs" (Eliade, p. 345), while a shaman of South America reported turning "into an animal and drink[ing] the blood of his enemies" (Eliade, p. 324).

Using Eliade's (1951/1964) description of shamanic costumes and shape shifting, researchers applied cross-cultural analogy methods and identified depictions of shamans in cave art. Makkay (1963) compared Siberian shamans to Breuil's drawing of The

Sorcerer. Lommel (1966) also embraced the interpretation of the Sorcerer as a shaman. Breuil's drawing of the Sorcerer also inspired the ideas and interpretations of Gimbutas (1974), Leeming and Page (1996), and others.

Yet, for some time, Breuil's drawing was thought to differ significantly from the original drawing on the cave wall. Skeptics drew attention to the differences and pointed out how Breuil altered and elaborated the figure in his drawing, mistaking rock cracks for marks (Ucko, 1992). However, cave artists often incorporated natural rock formations, such as rock cracks, into drawn images (Clottes & Lewis-Williams, 1998) or carved lines into rock.

Quite recently, French prehistorian Jean Clottes (2010) confirmed the accuracy of Breuil's drawing:

> The antlers were engraved and are as a consequence far more difficult to photograph than the painted lines.... Breuil's tracing is quite honest and admitted by all specialists who have seen the so-called Sorcerer in the cave (I have seen it myself perhaps 20 times over the years (last time about one month ago) and I can assure you that it is quite well preserved and genuine! (p. 129)

A few more human-animal composite figures were discovered and also interpreted as therianthropic shamans, i.e. shamans in the midst of a metamorphosis from human to animal. Magical therianthropic interpretations, often relying on costume elements described by Eliade (1951/1964) are far more common than interpretations concluding that the drawings depict costumed shamans. Thus, a linear drawing discovered in Lascaux Cave, depicting a man with an erection, a bird's head, and a nearby bird-topped pole or staff, was assumed to represent a male shaman in a state of ecstasy (Kirchner, 1952). Such interpretations drew criticism from Perrin (1995), and Bahn and Vertut (1997) as unsubstantiated; nonetheless, many scholars continue to accept the human-animal composite figures as therianthropic shamans.

When archaeologists identified Paleolithic images of shamans via specific symbols and themes common in known shamanic rituals and beliefs, the archaeologists used a combination of cross-cultural analogy and methods developed in the field of art history.

Iconography

Art historian Erwin Panofsky (1892-1968) formulated the process of iconography, which involved: analysis of motifs in images, stories, and allegories; interpretation of themes through historical, cultural, or social context; revelation of "symbolic values"; iconographic synthesis; and discovery of intrinsic meaning (1939/1939/1972, pp. 78-79). Familiarity with objects, events, sources, themes, and concepts were prerequisites for accurate and deep iconographic interpretation. Essential for the final stage of iconography was a "synthetic intuition (familiarity with the *essential tendencies of the human mind),* conditioned by personal psychology and '*Weltanschauung*'" (p 15).

The shamanic *Weltanschauung*, or worldview, constructed by Eliade (1951/1964) established a direction of thought and a momentum of ideas that influenced research in many disciplines, gaining strength through subsequent popular publications (e.g., Castaneda, 1968; Halifax, 1979, 1983; Harner,1968/1986), and additional archaeological, anthropological, and ethnographic explorations of shamanic arts (e.g., Lewis-Williams & Dowson, 1999; Lommel, 1966; Trueblood Brodzky, Danesewich, & Johnson, 1977).

In *Shamanism: The Beginning of Art*, German ethnographer, Andreas Lommel (1966) performed an iconographic exegesis of material culture objects created by shamans (masks, robes, drums, and other paraphernalia), meticulously explaining the symbolic meaning and cultural function of visual and plastic elements. Lommel's

"synthetic intuition" was informed by a wide range of sources. The book's comprehensive bibliography included numerous references, primarily dated from the last half of the 19th century through the first half of the 20th century as well as publications in German, Russian, English, French, and Spanish. Ideas from psychology, especially the theories of Carl Jung, also contributed to Lommel's interpretations of shamanic art.

Jungian Psychology

Although knowledge of shamanism was limited during the life of Carl Jung (1875-1961), his theories about archetypes, individuation, art, creativity, ritual, active imagination, and dream interpretation were drawn from studies on shamanism. Eliade's (1951/1964) book served as Jung's primary source of information (Ryan, 2002). In turn, Jung's ideas influenced the analysis and interpretation of art created by shamans (e.g., Lommel, 1966) and, as the ship's wheel turned further still, provided concepts used by Native Americans to analyze and interpret their own shamanic art (e.g., Trueblood Brodzky et al., 1977). Eventually, Jung's experiences, theories, and practices were interpreted as shamanic:

> Jung as a child was experiencing strange yet meaningful visions and dreams which made him believe in the world of spirits and resulted in social withdrawal. Such complex of both personal and environmental factors was resembling a complex of shamanic disease. During his psychotic episode he began to lose his grip of reality. He was haunted by strange and deadly visions which eventually led him to overcoming his illness and embracing personal experiences into his thought. In some way his psychoanalytical theory resembled shamanic cosmology with spirits as archetypes, psychoanalyst as a shaman and a therapy as a journey to the world of spirits. These metaphors (among others) seem to reinforce the thesis of Jung as a modern shaman and the analytical psychology as a modern shaman cosmology. (Koslor, 2010, p. 97; see also Ryan, 2002; Smith, 2007)

Jung's ideas on tribal art and culture also influenced Surrealists who believed that artists served as mediums or seers. For Russian-born American painter, John Graham (1881-1961), artists connect with the "unconscious" and the "primordial past" (as cited in

Colin Rhodes, 1994, p. 188) and, as envisioned by French poet André Breton (1896-1966), artists are responsible for creating the "living myth of our time" (Colin Rhodes, p. 189).

Contemporary Artists as Shamans

Flaws in the myth of progress *Weltanschauung* became increasingly obvious, during the past century, with increased crime, environmental degradation, and horrific wars. In response, a growing number of people became interested in shamanism (Hoppál, 1996) including many artists – although relatively few artists were inspired directly by shamanism. Compared to the number of contemporary artists, the number of artists influenced by shamanism is probably comparatively small.

Colin Rhodes (1994), in his book entitled *Primitivism and Modern Art,* noted "that an interest in alternative traditions and cultures often went hand in hand with artists' Messianic desire to deliver a new beginning to a Europe they perceived as old and spent" (p. 21). In a subchapter, "The Artist-Shaman," Colin Rhodes explained how disenchantment resulting from the world wars led artists, from Kandinsky to Abstract Abstractionists, to turn to "the primitive" to create "a new Western culture" (p. 185). Joseph Beuys (1921-1986), the European artist most identified with shamanism, created ritual performances and objects with the intent to heal (Levi Strauss, 1999). Soon, the growing body of literature on shamanism formed an upsurging wave of interest that swept through the arts of Europe and North America into feminist art (Orenstein, 1988), eco-art (McGreevy, 1987), and environmental art (Women Environmental Artists Directory, 2009).

To address societal ills, many artists created work inspired by their native culture's shamanic traditions, such as South Korean-born American video artist Nam June Paik (Heo, 2003); the Ojibwe (also called Ojibwa or Ojibway) painter of Canada, Norval Morrisseau (Beaton, 2008; Morrisseau & Dewdney, 2005; Petten, 2008); Hungarian Jóska Soós, Peruvian mestizo Pablo César Amaringo and South Korean Kim Kum Hwa (Looseleaf, 2002), who performed healing rituals in Los Angeles after the riots. As will be explained later, Morrisseau, Soós, Amaringo, and Kim are also considered shamans by their traditional communities.

Art Reviews

Visual artists are routinely, and uncritically, confounded with shamans. For example, art reviewer Finch (2004) wrote that artist Amy Myer's "longtime fans continue to be mesmerized by her shamanlike obsession with drawing" (para. 4). But, Finch does not explain how obsessive drawing is shamanic. Gibron (2005) commented on Andy Goldsworthy's environmental work, "Drawing on the druid nature of his native land… as well as the complexity of Celtic design, Goldsworthy is like a modern shaman, traveling the world, leaving his undeniable mark wherever he goes" (para. 5). However, Gibron does not develop the connection between druids and shamans or explain the connection between modern shamans, world travelers, and mark makers.

The preceding quotes romanticize artists, waving a magic wand of words, without offering comprehensive support for labeling artists as shamans. The understanding of *shaman* is vague. As a result, the artist/shaman relationship remains sketchy and oblique while the equalization of artist with shaman lacks meaning.

Rock Music

Similarly, writing about rock musician and poet Patti Smith, O'Hagan (2003) reflected:

> It strikes me, while watching her perform, that Patti Smith is perhaps the last of a lineage that stretches back beyond Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison to the likes of Antonin Artaud and Charles Baudelaire – the artist-performer as both shaman and catalyst, someone whose whole *raison d'être* is to evoke and invoke the transformative power of the Word. (para. 10)

O'Hagan linked rock music, Surrealism, and Romanticism with shamanism based on a single variable – how literature can be transformative.

Beyond this unsupported assertion, O'Hagan presented several generations of artists previously linked with shamanism: from Baudelaire (1821-1867), "who defined the modern poet as a shaman communing with and becoming God in the process of artistic creation" (Kuritz, 1988, p. 365); through Artaud (1896-1984), "someone who has made a spiritual trip for us – a shaman" (Sontag, 1976, p. lviii); followed by Morrison (1943-1971) for whom shamanism "focused the passion behind his rebellion and the power behind his persona" (Riordan & Prochnicky, 1992, p. 191); then to Hendrix (1942-1970) who "performed 'Wild Thing' – starting out with the movements of a burlesque dancer, and then metamorphosing into a shaman or a madman as he ignited his guitar" (Doggett, 2004, p. 84); and, finally, culminating with Smith. In popular culture, the association of rock musicians with shamans is persistent, wide ranging, and generally unsupported by research literature on shamanism.

This situation is partly due because *shaman,* as a social construct, emerged

> From relative obscurity and is applied to an increasingly broad range of phenomena. It becomes a magic word that transforms many a lackluster subject into one that glows with meaning…. To call something shamanistic now is to

> endow it with the magic of several thousand years of antiquity. (Pasztory, 2005, p. 225)

One exception to the conflation of rock musicians with shamans is Krippner's (2009c) comparison of Jim Morrison to traditional shamans. While Morrison was influenced by shamanic beliefs and practices, he "lacked the commitment to his community and the disciplined use of altered states of consciousness that characterize traditional shamans" (Krippner, p. 109). Unlike most writing about rock musicians as shamans, Krippner not only noted similarities between Morrison and traditional shamans, Krippner also differentiated Morrison from shamans, commenting:

> Traditional shamans often engage in wild, chaotic behavior. But it is a performance, not a life style; shamans respect the needs of their community and conserve their energy for their roles as healers, mediators, and protectors. Jim was out of control more often than he was in control. His music and his poetry reflect craft and skill, his life style does not. He chose dissipation over control, rage over compassion, death over life. His early demise indicates his lack of concern for his own well-being. Nor, unlike traditional shamans, did he manifest concern for the audiences who idolized him and were transported by his music into other worlds. (p. 115)

Art History

A few art historians also referred to some visual artists as shamans. For example, Rushing (1986) noted how "shamanic intent" influenced the painting of Jackson Pollock (p. 283). More recently, the *Pinacothèque de Paris* (2008) mounted a major exhibit that demonstrated the influence of Native American shamanism on Pollock's paintings.

In the field of art history, three researchers explored the shamanic roles of contemporary artists, primarily as evident in their works of art: Michael Tucker (1992), Mark Levy (1993), and Peggy Weiss (1995). In general, the historians combined two methods, Panofsky's iconographic analysis plus an informal kind of cross-cultural analysis of dystadial societies; i.e., societies that are not technologically matched.

Tucker – Dreaming with Open Eyes. Tucker (1992) engaged in an intuitive, discursive, stream of consciousness approach that explored how the "shamanlike" (pp. 19, 124, 177) intent of modern artists is revealed.

Tucker (1992) loosely linked shamanism with theories from Jungian psychology (e.g., Jung, 1923, 1974, 1988a, 1988b, 1989), religious studies by Mircea Eliade (e.g., Eliade, 1951/1964; 1959, 1965, 1972, 1974, 1975), ideas on mythology developed by Joseph Campbell (e.g., 1975, 1976, 1982), and the Great Goddess revival (e.g., Gimbutas, 1989; Orenstein, 1990; Starhawk, 1989), plus interests in "the primitive," Romanticism, alchemy, Sufism, transpersonal philosophies, mystical religions, and other esoteric schools of thought. Because Tucker veered away from shamanism repeatedly, running down numerous paths, mentioning multiple non-shamanic influences in the rapid course of comparisons, the reader's understanding of shamanism is confused and dissipated. Referring to research about artists as shamans Pasztory (2005) observed, "The word 'shamanism,' in referring to so much, is in danger of losing its meaning altogether" (p. 225).

Tucker (1992) offered multiple examples of modern artists who created spiritual, healing work that aided individuation, i.e., the process of transforming individuals through greater consciousness and integration (Jung, 1962). This intrapsychic focus on individual personal growth was a common theme in neoshamanism. Indeed, many of Tucker's (1992) references were books (e.g. Castaneda, 1968, 1971, 1974, 1975; Eliade, 1951/1964; Halifax, 1979, 1983; Harner,1968/1986) that provided inspiration, guidance, and momentum to the neoshamanism movement – a non-centralized, primarily text based

(see Noel, 1997), spiritual offshoot of the 1960s and 1970s human potential movement (see Znamenski, 2007).

Before, and after, the publication of *Dreaming with Open Eyes,* several of Tucker's (1992) references were criticized for cultural appropriation, flawed methods, or fictional accounts. The whirlpool of issues swirling around Castaneda's (1968, 1971, 1974, 1975) books, now regarded as fiction, were presented by de Mille (1976), Hagan (1992), Marshall (2007), Marton (1994), Murray (1981), and Znamenski (2007). Niehardt (1932/1989), an amateur ethnographer and poet, fabricated memorable quotes claimed to be the words of the visionary holy man, Black Elk[2].

As mentioned earlier, Harner (1968/1986) also received extensive criticism. Eliade's (1951/1964) definition of *shaman,* widely publicized through his popular and influential book, *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy,* was criticized for a number of inaccuracies, omissions, and over-generalizations (see Dudley, 1977; Heinze, 1991; Kehoe, 2000; Lewis, 1984; Walter & Neumann Fridman, 2004).

Eliade (1951/1964) described a universal shamanic cosmology consisting of three realms including a celestial realm ruled by a supreme being, a human inhabited planet, and a demon infested underworld. The upper and lower realms, reminiscent of heaven and hell, reflected Eliade's Christian beliefs (Wallis, 2003), but did not accurately represent numerous cultures that believe in seven or nine realms (see Siikala, 1992/2004), or as many as 10 realms (see McGhee, 2001). In addition, some cultures configure realms differently, including realms of water (Piers Vitebsky, 1995), imagination (Achterberg, 2002), spirits, animals, nature, mountains, or liminal zones (Walter & Neumann Fridman,

[2] Bellin (2008, pp. 172-187) provided a thorough overview of the controversy regarding *Black Elk Speaks* (Niehardt, 1932/1988).

2004). Tucker (1992) relied on Eliade with regards to shamanic cosmology and other details that were inaccurate creations of Eliade's "own centered and celestial imagination" (Noel, 1997, pp. 91-92).

Another weakness in Eliade's (1951/1964) research, discussed earlier in this dissertation, was his androcentric bias (Christ, 1998) despite evidence of female shamans (see Benedict, 1938/1958; Dixon, 1908/2004) published prior to Eliade's book. In contrast, Tucker's argument abandons Eliade by mentioning numerous shamanlike artists who are women.

Wallis (2004) saw how Eliade's "decontextualized and universalized" concept of *shaman,* when applied to artists, found "foreground similarity at the expense of difference" (p. 7). In this manner, Tucker (1992) focused on similarities that confirmed his ideas regarding the shamanlike qualities of artists – while ignoring differences that would disconfirm his argument. Wallis selected Tucker's book, *Dreaming with Open Eyes: The Shamanic Spirit in 20th Century Art and Culture* as an example of a broadly applied metanarrative of shamanism, derived from Eliade, which Wallis noted was "precisely the kind of approach anthropologists, archaeologists, and others in cultural studies have deconstructed" (p. 27).

In Postmodernism, the term *metanarrative* refers to a socially constructed story often presenting what is believed to be a universal truth, "a global or totalizing cultural narrative schema which orders and explains knowledge and experience" (Stephens & McCallum, 1998, p. 6). With regards to Eliade's (1951/1964) theories about shamanism, metanarrative refers to his global generalization of "facts" about shamans. Eliade's

metanarrative thrust combined with his interpretation of shamanism as the prototypical Ur religion – in which glimmerings of Christianity could be found (Wallis, 2003).

In the "Epilogue" to *Shamanism: Archaic Techniques of Ecstasy*, Eliade (1951/1964) commented, "More than once we have discerned in the shamanic experience a 'nostalgia for paradise' that suggests one of the oldest types of Christian mystical experience" (p. 508). Eliade's ideas influenced Tucker who described how the "drum playing, dancing, and singing" of shamans can lead to "the trance that will take them beyond ordinary time to the mythic time of beginnings and plenty" (p. 86) – in other words, back to the Judeo-Christian Eden.

However, there are myths that disprove Tucker's (1992) assertion regarding a plentiful mythic time. In the Mayan cosmogonic myth, for example, the earliest people did not live in paradise. Instead, the first humans lived in darkness for many generations (D. Tedlock, 1996). Similarly, the Hopi creation myth begins with humans in an underworld that is dark, cramped, and crowded (Leonard & McClure, 2004). Tucker's errors reveal problems that result from overly broad generalizations, relying primarily on the theories of one researcher, not considering critiques of primary references, a diffused and confused definition of shaman, and an inadequate literature review.

Despite these methodological weaknesses, Tucker opened further the door of conversation on the contemporary artist as shaman. As support for his argument in favor of the artist as shaman, Tucker (1992) wrote of artists who are "shamanlike" or "shamanic" due to signs of mysticism, "primal simplicity" (p. 52), mythopoeisis, ecstasy, visions, spirituality, reverie, *participation mystique,* altered states of consciousness, dreams, "cosmic religiosity" (p. 113), individuation, woundedness, or an intent to heal.

Although not explicitly stated as such, these qualities can be seen as components of Tucker's diffused definition of shaman.

Tucker (1992) made an important distinction between art that illustrated or depicted shamans, like the work of Austin Osman Spare, Susan Seddon Boulet, or Deborah Koff-Chapin, compared to art that "contains *within itself* the mythopoeic (and formal) power needed to stimulate transformative, shamanic qualities of consciousness in the onlooker" (p. 50). In his regard for "the onlooker," the art audience, Tucker passed through the invisible wall often preventing art historians, anthropologists, or psychologists from seeing the creative experiences of the art audience that may be similar to shamanic experiences in traditional communities.

As a writer, Tucker (1992) undertook a mission to heal perceptions of modern art as being "redolent of socio-historical despair and psychic disintegration" (p. 258). Tucker showed how many "twentieth-century artists have laid the essential, multidimensional foundations for the 'rainbow bridge' of the new, synthesizing consciousness which is so sorely needed today" (p. 258). In Tucker's opinion, contemporary artists are constructing important structural components of the rainbow bridge – from the raw materials of shamanism.

Levy – Technicians of Ecstasy. Levy (1993) observed how "ecstasy, the most vital element of religion, has almost disappeared from conventional forms of worship" (p. xv). In response, some artists "resumed the ancient role of the shaman" (Levy, 1993, p. xv) by becoming what Eliade (1951/1964) called "technicians of ecstasy" (p. 4).

Levy wrote his book, in part, due to his concern about the rampant use of illegal drugs by students at the art school where Levy taught. He believed that shamanism,

especially the practice of seeing and the experience of ecstasy, could provide art students with alternatives to illegal drug use.

In his book, Levy (1993) included a definition of *shaman* from anthropologist Ruth-Inge Heinze. First, a shaman has the ability to "access alternating states of consciousness at will" (p. ix). Second, the shaman serves "the community and fulfills vital needs" (p. x). Third, a shaman is the mediator "between the sacred and the secular" (p. xi). Fourth, "Divine messages" are delivered by the shaman to the community via "symbols, metaphors, and rituals" that "shift[s] the attention" (p. xi) of clients through art. Although this definition of shaman is included early in Levy's book, he did not undertake a systematic comparison of artists to shamans based on the definition's constructs.

Instead, Levy (1993) discussed how shamanlike artistic seeing, dreaming, and performing are important cultural contributions. For Levy, shamanic works of art, invested with "spiritual content," offer alternatives for "artists who are seeking to go beyond the idiosyncratic selfishness, commodity fetishism, adherence to fashion, and sterile appropriation that informs much of contemporary art" (p. 303). Levy differentiates such shamanic art from works by artists who "simply borrow spiritual contents by appropriating images and styles from a wide range of cultures, including tribal art," resulting in "a simulacrum of meaning which lacks depth" (p. 303). This is an important distinction, between art that *is* shamanic and art that *appears* or *pretends* to be shamanic, between a shamanic lived reality and a poseur in shaman's clothing. In Levy's opinion, shamanic art does not require a tribal, "primitive" style.

While Levy (1993) found similarities between modern artists as shamans, setting the artistic interest in shamanism within a historical context, the discussions are long, complex reveries, intuitively directed, with side trips venturing outside of the bounds of shamanism into topics such as Buddhism. Such wandering produced a profusion of meandering, occasionally smeared ink lines on the map illustrating overlapping territories shared by contemporary artists and shamans. Instead of further supporting an argument demonstrating that contemporary artists are shamans, the multiple influences noted by Levy more accurately represent the many, complex, overlapping relationships between spirituality and the arts.

Levy (1993) made several factual errors regarding shamans. Levy is unaware of several routes by which people become shamans. He emphatically stated that shamans never kill animals although his primary reference, Eliade (1951/1964), mentions the sacrifice of animals several times (pp. 190, 240). While such factual errors are minor issues without direct bearing on the role of artists as shamans, these mistakes reveal that Levy did not read widely or gain a broad understanding of shamanism from multiple sources. Levy's narrow literature review is also evident in his acceptance of the oversimplified shamanic cosmology of three realms constructed by Eliade and Harner (1968/1986).

Levy relied on a narrow range of references regarding shamans: that is, nine references on shamans published from 1967 to 1992, primarily texts contributing to the neoshamanism movement. Levy's study lacks data from peer-reviewed journals in the fields of archaeology, anthropology, ethnography, or psychology. Extended studies, focused on one specific shamanic culture, are also absent.

While Levy's (1993) book is weakened by less rigorous research methods, he succeeded in advancing the association of artists with shamans, providing support to artists with spiritual inspiration and intent, and underscoring the ability of art to provide shamanic services to the art community.

Weiss – Kandinsky and Old Russia. Art historian Weiss (1995) performed an extensive analysis of Wassily Kandinsky's (1866-1944) sources of artistic inspiration, focusing on ethnography, folk culture, and shamanism.

In the chapter entitled "The Artist as Shaman," Weiss (1995) offered a description of *shaman* synthesized from reports and research generated by Mikhailovskii (1892), Eliade (1951/1964), Hultkrantz (1978), Krader (1978), Siikala (1978), and Voigt (1978). According to Weiss (1995), a shaman plays an important social role, as an "intercessor between humankind and the supernatural powers," healing others, performing divination, insuring successful hunts, and conveying "the dead safely to their own realm" (p. 72). Weiss also mentioned typical experiences of shamans such as "ecstatic hallucinations," initiatory dismemberment, self-cure, and shamanic illness (p. 72).

Weiss equated shamanic illness with the various physical, psychological, and social illnesses of Kandinsky; however, Weiss did not address how shamanic illnesses are differentiated from non-shamanic illnesses. In a shamanic society, many individuals suffer a variety of diseases that do not indicate future vocations as shamans. What specifically made Kandinsky's many illnesses qualify as shamanic? Weiss did not develop her argument. Moreover, she did not compare Kandinsky with all constructs in her definition of shaman.

To analyze Kandinsky's paintings, Weiss (1995) applied Panofsky's (1972) iconography methods. In her exegesis of Kandinsky's shamanic motifs, Weiss integrated numerous sources of data on shamanic images, legends, and allegories. Unlike Tucker (1992) and Levy (1993), Weiss read early Russian anthropological publications regarding shamanism. This knowledge allowed her to interpret shamanic themes in Kandinsky's work through the *Weltanschauung* of Siberian shamanism – with which Kandinsky was familiar due to his formal training as an anthropologist, his familiarity with ethnographic studies on shamans, and his field research in Siberia. Based on this knowledge, Kandinsky developed a visual vocabulary of "schematic hieroglyphs" (p. 89) composed of symbols found in shamanic paraphernalia and myths syncretized with symbols and myths from pagan, folk, and Christian sources.

Weiss (1995) ventured outside of art history into anthropology, ethnography, and religions studies, offering rich descriptions of acts, beliefs, imagery, myths, and material culture typical of shamanic, folk, and pagan societies. Like Levy (1993) and Tucker (1992), Weiss recognized how modern artists were inspired and influenced by many types of spirituality.

In a chapter entitled "Painting as Shamanizing," Weiss (1995) explained how Kandinsky's small, quickly executed watercolors "signaled that the shaman had once again taken up his drum and sought, by 'shamanizing,' to overcome the catastrophic disruption of war, revolution, and personal crisis" (p. 121), complex relationships with women, and the death of his young son – all forms of environmental pressure influencing and fueling Kandinsky's creative transformation through art. Weiss wrote, "Kandinsky

clearly enunciated his shamanistic intentions and delineated a parallel between the creative act of the artist and the shamanizing of the shaman" (p. 163).

However, the *process* of creativity, as an *act* of shamanizing, was never fully explicated by Weiss (1995). Instead, she veered back to an iconographic analysis of Kandinsky's syncretic creative *product,* discussing how Kandinsky used "an ancient Buriat myth concerning the 'First Shaman'" (p. 130) as an allegory for the Russian revolution, sharing the myth's plot and describing how Kandinsky depicted the myth in paint.

In her investigation of Kandinsky's relationship with shamanism, Weiss (1995) unknowingly ventured into four categories, known as "the four P's" (see Rhodes, 1961) employed by creativity studies in the analysis of creativity: person, process, product, and environment press (see also Barron, 1988; Richards, 1981; Taylor, 1988). Weiss briefly mentioned aspects of Kandinsky's personality. The environmental press of war and personal relationships was explored. Kandinsky's creative products, his works of art, underwent careful and extensive iconographic analysis. However, a thorough exploration of Kandinsky's creative process, as related to shamanism, awaited a cross-disciplinary researcher familiar with creativity studies research and capable of synthesizing all "four P's" (person, process, product, and environmental press) of creativity into a cohesive whole.

Creativity Studies

In the 1960s and 1970s, the field of creativity studies gained momentum through a number of significant publications by psychologist Frank Barron (1922-2002;1963, 1965), existential psychologist Rollo May (1909-1994; 1975), humanist psychologist

Abraham Maslow (1908-1970; 1971), and others. At present, there are several peer-reviewed journals focused on the psychology of creativity, including *Creativity Research Journal* and *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts,* numerous scholarly books, and an extensive *Encyclopedia of Creativity* (Runco & Pritzker, 2007) recently updated in a second edition. Nonetheless, the significant amount data generated in creativity studies remains untapped by almost all research comparing artists and shamans.

Whitley – *Cave Paintings and the Human Spirit*

One exception is *Cave Paintings and the Human Spirit: The Origin of Creativity and Belief,* written by archaeologist David Whitley (2009). The former president of the International Council on Monuments and Sites, Whitley also previously served as the Chief Archaeologist at the University of the Witwatersrand in South Africa and at the Universidad de San Carlos in Guatemala. Despite his achievements as a scholar of archaeology, Whitley misinterpreted and misapplied data from creativity studies.

Whitley (2009) made absolute statements diagnosing multiple psychopathological disorders in Paleolithic shamans, including "borderline antisocial" (p. 213), personality disorders, sleep disorders (p. 224), unipolar depression, cyclothymia, manic-depression, and schizoaffective disorder (p. 229). His arguments were founded upon a study conducted by Richards, Kinney, Lunde, and Benet (1988), "Creativity in Manic Depressive, Cyclothymes, and Their Normal First Degree Relatives" as well as additional studies (Andreasen, 1997; Jamison, 1993)[3] linking artists with mental illness.

Whitley concluded, "the first art," as evident in the caves of France, "is the product of mad geniuses suffering from the mood disorders that, historically (and likely

[3] The studies by Richards, Kinney, Lunde, and Benet (1988), Andreasen (1997), and Jamison (1993) are reviewed and discussed further in Chapter 7, under "Intertwining Paths of Mental Health and Mental Illness."

prehistorically), were the defining characteristics of shamanism" (pp. 244-245). Thus, for Whitley, the defining constructs of *shaman* are mood disorders combined with genius. However, in sailing towards his conclusion, Whitley (2009) downplayed and misinterpreted key findings in the Richards et al. (1988) study.

Recalling the results of the 1988 study, Richards (2010) stated, "It was *not* the sicker people who were more creative. Better functioning individuals – or people during better functioning mood states – showed the highest creativity" and also that the creative "compensatory advantage was also suggested for psychiatrically *normal* 1st degree relatives of bipolar probands. In addition, the bipolar history may manifest only in a family member and not in the [highly creative] person."

In other words, many of the most creative members of the study population were not psychopathological, but instead, had 1st degree relatives who were bipolar. Alternatively, some of the most creative individuals were better functioning, which indicates a higher degree of mental health and perhaps a subclinical or mild presence of symptoms that are inadequate in number or strength to justify a diagnosis of psychopathology. Also, some individuals demonstrated more creativity in mood states with better function. Whitley may be correct that the genetic evolution of bipolar disorders contributed to the creative ability of Paleolithic shamans to paint masterpieces in caves; however, the bipolar disorder would be more likely to be found in mild forms or in the relatives of early cave artists/shamans.

An additional problem is present in the application of the Richards et al. (1988) study to Prehistoric cave artists who might be shamans. The Richards et al. study selected a clinical population and relatives of the population for study. Furthermore, the 1988

study identified creativity through expressions of creativity often expressed in everyday ways generally not related to shamanic properties. Research findings on everyday creativity are not necessarily representative of research data on the relationship between psychopathology and artistic or eminent creativity. Potentially, shamans might represent a unique set of creators possibly due to the transformation that occurs during apprenticeship when "power," in other words, voluntary regulation, is gained over symptoms of psychosis identified as hallucinations, paranormal experiences, magical thinking, or relationships with purported spirits (see Stephen & Suryani, 2000)[4].

Whitley (2009) also erroneously claimed, "The ethnographic literature is unequivocal on the fact that shamans suffered from mental illness" (p. 227). But, Whitley did not provide citations for the ethnographic literature he is referring to, preventing readers from examining his sources. Had Whitley ventured further and deeper into ethnographic studies, he would discover reports (see Lafitau, 1724/2004), reviews (see Noll, 1983; Ripinsky-Naxon, 1993; Walsh, 2001, 2007) and studies (see Boyer, Klopfer, Brawer, & Kawai, 1964; Stephen & Suryani, 2000; van Ommeren et al., 2004) contradicting his statement. Whitley did not present an argument supporting his rejection of these studies. Moreover, Whitley did not acknowledge counterexamples to his polemic, such as shamanic societies that require an individual to be high functioning prior to becoming a shaman (Krippner, 1991; Shirokogoroff, 1935/2004).

Whitley's (2009) argument also relied on reports of shamanic illness as evidence of psychopathology in shamans. However, there is a vast difference between someone who is undergoing shamanic illness and someone who accepted the call to shamanism,

[4] For further discussion, see "Balinese Shamans and Autonomous Imagination" in Chapter 7.

entered apprenticeship, acquired training, experienced initiation, and became a socially designated practicing shaman (Legerski, 2006; Stephen & Suryani, 2000).

Boyer et al. (1964) compared Apache shamans, pseudoshamans without social designation, and non-shamans, reporting: "In their mental approach, the shamans appear less hysterical than the other groups" (p. 176) and were "healthier than their societal co-members…. This finding argues against [the] stand that the shaman is severely neurotic or psychotic, at least insofar as the Apaches are concerned" (p. 179). Similarly, a second study found Balinese balian, in other words, shamans, showed superior mental health (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) and a third study concluded that Bhutanese shamans had average mental health (van Ommeran et al., 2004).

Whitley's broad-stroked generalizations and arguments are questionable for additional reasons. First, shamans are not exclusively artists. Shamans serve many societal roles: psychotherapist, physician, diagnostician, spiritual and/or religious functionary (Krippner, 1991), masseuse (Leavitt, 1997), herbalist (Joshi, 2004), and more. Second, the concepts of art and artist are recent cultural constructions of the West (Soffer & Conkey, 1997). Thus, the role of artists is also a recent phenomenon and artists, as defined in the West, are not found in every culture. Third, psychopathological diagnostic categories are also recent constructions of the West (Vaughn, 2010) and might not be directly transferable to shamanic societies.

Can the multiple roles of a shaman be reduced solely to the role of the artist? How can the different vocational roles played by shamans be compared to the different kinds and degrees of mental health or mental illness found in artists using different media, eminent creators in artistic and nonartistic fields, or everyday creators? Even

within practitioners of different art media, degrees and kinds of psychopathology vary. In a society without the concept of *art*, can the material culture objects of shamanism be equated with art? Can a shaman be absolutely equated with an artist? How do differences in societal context, between the designated, central social role of shamans and the marginalized social status of many artists, affect manifestations of psychopathology? And what would Whitley discover if he ventured away from the straight road of his polemic? Instead of answering questions about the Paleolithic shamanic artist, Whitley's ideas provoke many questions and point to several issues regarding the study of shamans as artists.

In future studies, researchers utilizing data from creativity studies should be familiar with the field and understand the subtleties and complexity of studies regarding creativity. A broad understanding of issues around the definition of art, and, thus, the definition of artist, requires knowledge of aesthetics and art criticism. To understand the role and definition of material culture, the researcher must be acquainted with theories from the field of anthropology. To apply psychopathological labels from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders,* published by the American Psychiatric Association (2000), the researcher should be a trained, experienced diagnostician. At the same time, the researcher should also be aware of research demonstrating that the West's psychopathological diagnostic categories are not identical to diagnostic categories in non-Western societies (Vaughn, 2010). Such explorations may be the task of future studies conducted by individual researchers or collaborative groups of researchers that are familiar with shamanism, anthropology, psychology, aesthetics, art criticism, and creativity studies.

Shamans and Creativity

A vast reservoir of research in creativity studies remains to be tapped in the comparisons of contemporary artists to shamans. Such data may be partly relevant to shamans inasmuch as shamans were often paired with creativity (Bergquist, 1996; Harner, 1999). An early travel account described shamans as romantic figures, respected "native geniuses" (Beliavskii as cited in Znamenski, 2003) who tragically wasted their talents in mundane routines. Recognizing that many, if not most, of the early eminent creators were probably shamans, Richards (2000-2001) identified many ways in which shamans are "highly creative" (p. 127) including how "they dare to depart from the ruts of ordinary reality to bring back broader perspectives for all of us" (p. 127).

Saniotis (2009) mused, "Early shamans...must have generated creative ways of rapport with the nonhuman world" including the ability to slip out of 'perceptual boundaries'" and the creation of "a litany of novel symbolisms and immersion in nonordinary states" (p. 466). Through a kind of "subjective creativity," artists, shamans, and mystics "often bypass[ed] 'normal' consciousness in preference to 'alternative schemata'" at the "nexus between the religious imagination and creativity" (Saniotis, p. 472). The "creation of images from the imagination or 'the mind's eye' required a seminal evolutionary change in the neural structures underpinning perception" with attendant evolutionary advantages (Morriss-Kay, 2010). The "evolution of artistic creativity" and "stylistic change must have been due to rare, highly gifted individuals" (Morriss-Kay) who were probably shamans.

The development of shamanic creative potential is also supposedly related to the development of purported psychic talents (Kharitonova, 2004). According to B. Tedlock

(2004b), during divination sessions, “individual poetic creativity” of shamans contribute to the “ideas, metaphors, and symbols” that “suggest various possible interpretations” (p. 447).

As Heinze (1997) observed, a shaman provides important services to the community. Many of these services involve creativity. Shamanic creative processes might be applied in rituals, in semantic meaning making (Rasmussen, 2004), while playing a trickster role (Balzer, 2004), in politics, and in the invention of healthy images to support healing (van Deusen, 2004). Shamans also demonstrated creativity when constructing ritual paraphernalia as well as during ritual performances, with elements of theatre, dance, music, and oral literature also contributing to services providing benefits to communities.

Based on these links between shamans and creativity, a careful and rigorous application of data from creativity studies to the comparisons of contemporary artists with shamans seems reasonable. Inasmuch as shamans are highly creative individuals, data from creativity studies might deepen our understanding of shamanism, perhaps revealing similarities between shamans and contemporary artists, possibly differentiating shamans from artists, and potentially contributing towards our understanding of creativity.

Problem Statements

As demonstrated in the preceding overview, previous theories from multiple disciplines did not systematically compare artists to shamans and did not make sufficiently compelling arguments about the artist-shaman. As a result, our understanding

of relationships between artists and shamans is poorly developed, incomplete, flawed, and fragmented.

Some previous studies are inadequate due to acceptance of prior assumptions that artists are shamans as well as biased research. Many early reports on shamans and the arts (Diderot, 1751-1765/2004; Gmelin, 1751/2004; Kohn, 2006; Thévet, 1557/2004) were marred by colonialist biases[5] while theories on cave artists (e.g., Breuil, 1952; Cartailhac & Breuil, 1906) wrongly excluded women as shamans (B. Tedlock, 2005). Most early researchers lacked awareness of their Western perspective. In addition, concepts from fine art were generalized onto shamanic societies that do not have the concept *art.*

In more recent studies, data on contemporary artists was derived primarily from a Caucasian population, except for a few artists such as South Korean-born American video artist Nam June Paik (Heo, 2003) who was accepted by fine art gatekeepers in the New York City and international art scenes. Studies on contemporary artists as shamans rarely included artists who created work inspired by their native culture's shamanic traditions[6].

Most previous studies are also weakened by a variety of flawed research methods such as:

- Not designing explicit theoretical research methods;
- Not establishing a validated definition of shaman for comparisons;
- Using concepts without operationalization as constructs;

[5] See Kohn (2006) for a general discussion of colonialist bias and Vaughn (2010) regarding colonialism and psychopathological diagnoses.

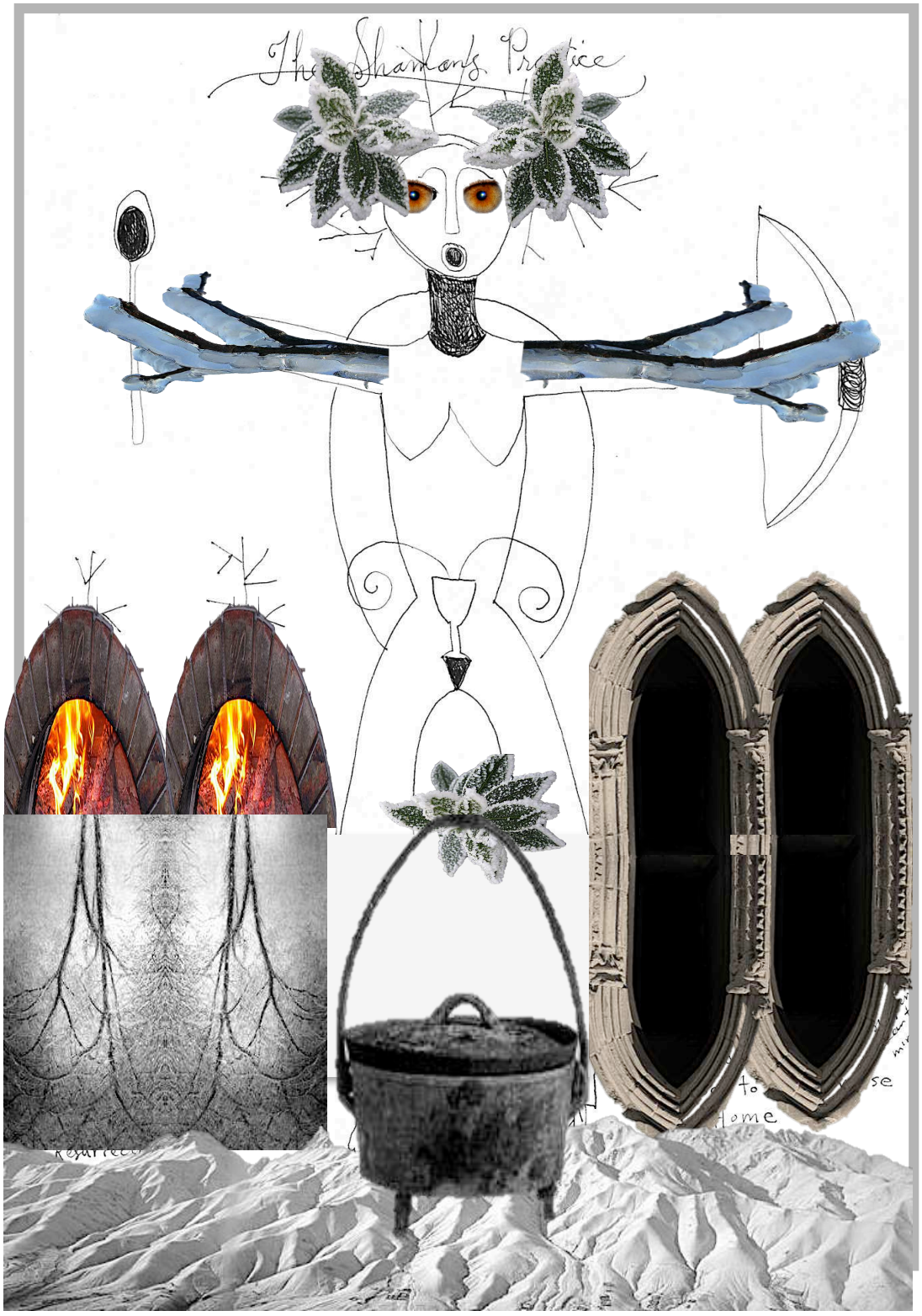
[6] Examples of artists creating within traditional shamanic cultures include Anishinaabe/Ojibwe painter-shaman, Norval Morrisseau (Beaton, 2008; Morrisseau & Dewdney, 2005; Petten, 2008, January 1); Huichol shamanic artist José Benítez Sánchez (Furst, 2003), Peruvian mestizo shamanic artist Pablo Amaringo (Luna, 2003; Luna & Amaringo, 1999), and South Korean shaman-choreographer-dancer Kim Kum Hwa (Looseleaf, 2002).

- Narrow literature reviews, flawed references, and inadequate expertise;
- Relying on data from secondary resources;
- Incorporating esoteric or spiritual practices that are not shamanism;
- Misapplying cross-disciplinary research findings; and
- Offering conclusions without adequate support for arguments.

In addition, there is an opportunity to contribute to our understanding of the artist/shaman relationship by:

- Applying data from the underutilized field of creativity studies;
- Focusing on properties of artists instead of art products;
- Including the art audience experience as a means of validating or testing the artist-shaman association as well as a way to broaden our understanding of artist-art-audience creative systems;
- Contributing the voice of an artist-researcher; and
- Integrating innovative arts-based inquiry research methods.

If a rigorously designed study carefully considers research from multiple disciplines, acts to eliminate biases, implements explicit theoretical methods, and bases the systematic comparison of contemporary artists to shamans on a validated and operationalized definition of *shaman*, then I believe it is possible to construct a better theoretical model describing relationships, similarities, and differences between contemporary artists and shamans, potentially inspiring change and influencing practices of artists, art audiences, art schools, and art institutions. Thus, this study is aligned with values expressed in Saybrook University's (2009) mission statement to make "transformation[al] change in individuals, organizations, and communities" (para. 1).


The Shamans Practice
to
home

Chapter 3: Research Methods

Seer (with Antlers, Beak, Feathers, Spoon, Bow, and Arrow), Denita Benyshek, drawing, and photo montage, 2012.

The real voyage of discovery consists
not in seeking new landscapes
but in having new eyes.

Marcel Proust (1948), French Novelist

In this chapter, I present the primary research question. I share my rationale for selecting theoretical research methods and describe processes of definition, archival data collection, comparison, and theoretical model construction. I demonstrate how this study is aligned with values expressed in the mission statement of Saybrook University. My background and qualifications, as a cross-disciplinary scholar and artist, are offered accompanied by descriptions of arts-based and arts-informed research methods. Delimitations of the population are provided. Finally, appropriate validation methods are suggested.

Research Question

Do properties of some contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman*? In other words, to apply set theory, does the conceptual category *contemporary artists* contain all, or some, defining constructs of *shaman*?

The research question is exploratory in nature, seeking to "investigate little-understood phenomena," "to identify or discover important categories of meaning," and to "generate hypotheses for future research" (Marshall & Rossman, 1989, p. 33). Moreover, the question is constructed to lead to multidirectional comparisons of properties from subsets of contemporary artists and operationalized constructs defining shamans with data from creativity studies. Potentially, this study might illuminate our understanding of artists, shamans, and creators.

Within the research question, the transitive verb *do* (2012) refers to actions that "bring to pass," "carry out... perform, execute... commit... bring about, effect... to put forth... to bring into existence: produce... to be engaged in the study or practice of... to

work at as a vocation... act, [or] behave...” Actions performed by artists are compared with defining constructs of *shaman* towards constructing a descriptive theoretical model.

Fulfill (2010) is the second part of a compound verb, meaning “to put into effect…to convert into reality…to develop the full potentialities of.” If a contemporary artist developed and put into effect all constructs defining *shaman,* then that artist would qualify as a *shamanic artist,* i.e., an artist who demonstrated all necessary conditions established by the defining constructs of *shaman.*

Necessary conditions is a phrase used in logical reasoning, often paired with *sufficient conditions*:

> A handy tool in the search for precise definitions is the specification of necessary and/or sufficient conditions for the application of a term, the use of a concept, or the occurrence of some phenomenon or event….
>
> An ambition of twentieth-century philosophy was to analyze and refine the definitions of significant terms…. Central to this goal was specifying at least in part the conditions to be met for correct application of terms, or under which certain phenomena could truly be said to be present. (Brennan, 2003/2010)

Necessary conditions may be established through “only if” (Brennan, 2003/2010). An artist is a shaman only if the artist fulfills *all* constructs defining *shaman.* In Chapter 4, *shaman* is defined via the presence of multiple properties. These properties comprise the necessary conditions for recognizing an artist as a shaman. All of these properties must be fulfilled for an artist to fully qualify as a shaman.

Sufficient conditions do not apply to the identification of an artist as a shaman because the presence of only one sufficient condition would be inadequate to identify a shaman. A spiritual practice is not sufficient to identify a shaman; though, in contrast, the presence of a trunk is sufficient for the identification of an elephant.

However, not all constructs defining *shaman* must be present in the population of contemporary artists selected for comparison with *shaman* because the primary research question is constructed to also include considerations of partial, temporary, or fragmentary fulfillment *shaman's* defining constructs.

Design

A rigorously conducted theoretical study, with explicitly stated methods, an operationalized and validated definition of *shaman,* and systematic comparisons of properties of contemporary artists to constructs defining *shaman* will remedy numerous problems identified in the critical literature review in Chapter 2. In addition, this study integrates data from creativity studies. Furthermore, this study offers the perspective of an artist-researcher through arts-based inquiry methods. The result is a well-founded theoretical model. Additional information regarding this study's theoretical framework is integrated throughout the rest of this chapter.

Theoretical Research

Kenny (2010) advised:

> When deciding to undertake theoretical dissertations, a crucial consideration is the state of theory regarding the phenomenon or phenomena to be investigated. Has a theory or theories already been advanced? Are they adequate? Do they need to be extended or updated, to accommodate new or overlooked data and developments? Are they complex enough to accurately explain the phenomenon? Are they culturally myopic and biased, or did they consider data from the theories or worldviews of other cultures when they were developed? Do theoretical gaps exist? Do related theories from different disciplines need to be synthesized? Do you believe there is a better alternative theory? (pp. 6-7)

The answers to these questions point to the importance of theoretical research on the artist as shaman. Theories were advanced that were inadequate for many reasons, partly due to over simplified, incomplete, or flawed definitions of *shaman* and a lack of systematically performed research methods especially in the comparative process. As a

result, theoretical models of artists as shamans are inaccurate and theories built upon these models are weak.

A significant amount of data on shamans was not considered. There is now access to data unavailable in the past, such as translations of Russian publications and extensive quantities of data now available via Internet databases. Information from culture specific studies, publications from the past few years, and research from creativity studies could be applied.

Location of explicit methods. Clingan (2008) observed that in theoretical research: "A methods section is not generally needed....rather, it is evident that textual research was carried out in the way the scholar introduces the issue, reviews the literature, and discusses existing and new ideas throughout the work" (p. 6). Numerous previous, theoretical-research dissertations conformed to Clingan's (2008) advice, omitting the chapter on research methods. Alternatively, many theoretical dissertations offered surprisingly cursory and fragmented overviews of methods. These approaches, in my opinion, often resulted in substantially weakened arguments and dissertations of poor quality. Indeed, Collen (2008, 2010) and Kenny (2010b) argued for strengthening theoretical research through deliberately applied and explicitly stated research methods. Therefore, this study presents a detailed description of research methods that led to theoretical model generation.

For studies of a theoretical nature, "explanation and application of the method may extend throughout the dissertation and the dissertation might not adhere to the typical kind and sequence of chapters" (A. Collen, personal communication, 2008). Herein, some research methods were explained and exercised within the historical

overview while additional research methods will be found in chapters operationalizing constructs and making comparisons. Although these methods are located outside of this chapter on research methods, the methods are explained. These explicit, organized descriptions of methods chart the research process and keep the voyage on course.

Theoretical research can perform and integrate all four research purposes identified by Marshall and Rossman (1989): exploration, explanation, description, and prediction. Data from the literature review can be explored, explained and interpreted differently through alternate perspectives, described through model construction, and used to predict the effect of new knowledge.

Moreover, exploration, explanation, description, and prediction may also be relevant to specific topics within the chapters devoted to operationalizing constructs and comparisons. While Chapter 10 synthesizes, discusses, and summarizes results, most analysis and results are presented during the comparison process. Likewise, ideas for future research are interspersed within the comparison chapters, located with the data from which the idea arose, with additional future research questions offered in Appendix B.

With the exception of collages, photomontages, poems, and quotes from artists that are transformed into poetry, my personal experiences will be explicitly designated as such, as indicated through the use of first-person singular pronouns and generally placed within discussion sections.

Archival Research

The use of archival data is appropriate when the amount of data required to test a hypothesis already exists (McBurney & White, 2009), whether as primary sources or

secondary sources previously collected by other researchers (Jackson, 2008). Moreover, archival data provides a wide array of information, from a greater scope of periods, places, cultures, and forms of environmental press, than could be collected by one researcher.

Population delimitation. The "population" of this study consists of archival documents about shamans, artists, and creativity; delimited to those documents that contain data relevant to comparisons of *contemporary artist* properties to constructs defining *shaman.* This study does not include properties of contemporary artists that are not found in shamans.

The archival documents considered herein represent a wide range of dates, starting with records from early European explorers and missionaries and continuing to the present day. Documents will be selected to represent a variety of different societies, ethnicities, continents, climates, and time periods.

Properties of contemporary artists, including traits of creative persons, stages in creative processes, elements of creative products, influences from environmental press, and goals driving creative purposes, are also identified in archival documents. Examples of individual artists from different ethnicities and eras illustrate how properties of individual artists are similar to constructs that define *shaman*.

Data collection. Data collection, on the topic of artist as shaman, began in 2004, starting with Saybrook University's course on shamanism, the *Learning Guide for CSP 3080: The Psychology of Shamanism* (Krippner, 1995/2008*)* and assigned texts. From these points of departure, I followed many branching trails of citations and references into books and peer-reviewed journals. I collected information guided by the defining

constructs of *shaman* as well as subcategories such as chanting and spirit possession for culturally specific examples, gleaned from numerous disciplines including the fields of psychology, creativity studies, archaeology, aesthetics, anthropology, mythology, religious studies, art criticism, and art history.

Data sources. The search for data utilized multiple sources, casting a wide net to "catch" information regarding relevant topics towards supporting divergent thought processes and the discovery of previously unidentified associations and relationships. I entered over 2,000 references into a bibliography software program. I read numerous physical copies of articles from peer-reviewed journals that fill several file drawers. While not all of this material directly contributed to this study, the array of information provided a wide base of knowledge from which this study arose. The different sources of data are described below.

The King County Library System in Washington State provided access to out of print books, exhibit catalogs, and almost all proceedings of the International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternate Forms of Healing dating from 1984 to 2004 through an exemplary interlibrary loan program. This library also mailed hard copies of peer-reviewed articles not accessible through databases.

Searches through online stores, for new and used books, discovered source material including books that are out of print. Google books provided online access to current books and past, out of print publications while Project Gutenberg provided online access to classic and historic texts.

Much of the information on artists came from my extensive, personal art library, especially the section focused on transpersonal, healing, and spiritual arts.

Another source of data was the set of interviews, conducted by artist Lauren Raine (2005), with nine spiritually transformative artists.

I used the following books for data regarding artists, art, and creativity: *Eminent Creativity, Everyday Creativity, and Health* (Runco & Richards, 1997), *The Encyclopedia of Creativity* (Runco & Pritzker, 1999), *Everyday Creativity and New Views of Human Nature: Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Perspectives* (Richards, 2007c), and numerous additional sources including the peer-reviewed journals, *Creativity Research Journal* and *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts.*

The following data bases were utilized: Academic Search Premier, Alt-Health Watch, ATLA Religion, Credo Reference, Ebrary Ebooks, E-HRAF World Cultures, Emerald Fulltext, Emerald Social Sciences eBooks, Encyclopedia Britannica, Encyclopedia of Psychology, ERIC, Ethnic NewsWatch, GenderWatch, Gale Virtual Reference, Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, JSTOR, National Newspapers, Netlibrary Ebooks, Newspaper Source, Oxford Art Online, Oxford Journals, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, ProQuest Research Library, PsycArticles, PsycBOOKS, Psychology Journals, PsycInfo, Pubmed, Sage Journals Online, Science Daily, and Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy.

Additional data was found as needed to facilitate comparisons and provide examples. Additional search terms arose as new lines of inquiry were revealed. "Archival research is an ongoing process," noted Gallo (2009), "one needs to be open to following the evidence on hand to sometimes unexpected destinations" (p. 265).

Construct Operationalization

To answer the research question requires conceptualizing both *artist* and *shaman* using rigorous operationalized definitions so that there is a basis for making meaningful comparisons and assessments. Babbie (2011) recognized that

> Scientists have to be 'masters' of their operational definitions for the sake of precision in observation, measurement, and communication. Otherwise, we would never know whether a study that contradicted ours did so only because it used a different set of procedures to measure one of the variables…. (p. 46)

Why Operationalization of Concepts is Important

As stated earlier, studies of artists as shamans by art historians presented varying definitions of *shaman,* but then failed to define the constructs or variables in the definition. Moreover, the art historians did not use their definitions of *shaman* as the foundation of their comparisons, which weakened their results. For example, Weiss (1995) stated that Kandinsky began shamanizing when he began painting. Although this comment is fascinating and compelling, the statement is meaningless because the reader does not know what Weiss meant by shamanizing in the context of painting. Weiss did not provide a description of how painting is similar to shamanizing based on an operationalized definition of *shaman*.

"Precise definitions are even more important in descriptive than in explanatory studies" (Babbie, 2009, p. 165), which may be especially applicable to studies of the arts or the humanities. Weiss (1995) did not apply a precise definition of *shaman* when she described the turmoil in Kandinsky's relationships as shamanic illness. The reader might wonder if all troubled relationships are signs of shamanic illness.

Nonetheless, art historians do operationalize definitions. An art historian might describe how the values of the high Renaissance are exemplified in Michelangelo's

sculptures. A definition of *Renaissance aesthetic values*, incorporating ideal beauty, reason, logic, and perfection, might be provided to operationalize the concept. Then, a systematic comparison process would demonstrate how each defining construct of *Renaissance aesthetic values* might or might not be seen in Michelangelos' sculpture.

When scholars conduct cross-disciplinary research, carefully operationalized definitions increase the validity of results across all disciplines involved. In the dictionary, *Art History: The Key Concepts*, Harris (2006) described his method of operationalizing concepts:

> Each entry provides: (1) the basic definition of a term; (2) an exploration of some of the complexities of its development, function, and significance; (3) some illustrative historical or contemporary examples of artworks or items of visual culture related to this concept; and (4) some bibliographic references that will enable the reader to follow up the term and the ways in which it has been used in actual research and scholarship. (p. xii)

Harris (2006) defines a concept and then "puts it to work" in the analysis of art objects or forms of visual culture, with the analysis situated historically within a research trajectory. Similar methods can be used to operationalize concepts in research on shamanism and artists. However, instead of applying the concepts primarily to creative products, the focus of art historians, the operationalized definitions can be applied to the creative person, creative process, and creativity influencing environmental press. This venture requires cross-disciplinary research outside the usual boundaries of art history.

"To conduct evaluation research, we must be able to operationalize, observe, and recognize the presence or absence of what is under study" (Babbie, 2009, p. 392). Indeed, this dissertation was constructed to remedy the lack of operationalized definitions in the comparisons of artists to shamans and to provide a broad foundation for future research.

For readers who are not familiar with research methods involving operationalized definitions and constructs, I provide an explanation of this technique. This process also contributes towards making my research methods explicit.

Operationalizing Definitions

An operational definition is "The concrete and specific definition of something in terms of the operations by which observations are to be categorized" (Babbie, 2011, p. 77). A definition is operationalized when the constructs are used in measurements, comparisons, or other methods of assessment. Babbie explained further:

> Operationalization is an extension of conceptualization that specifies that exact procedures that will be used to measure the attributes of variables.
>
> Operationalization involves a series of interrelated choices: specifying the range of variation that is appropriate for the purposes of a study, determining how precisely to measure variables, accounting for relevant dimensions of variables, clearly defining the attributes of variables and their relationships, and deciding on an appropriate level of measurement….
>
> Operationalization begins in the design phase of a study and continues through all phases of the research project, including the analysis of data….
>
> Criteria of the quality of measures include precision, accuracy, reliability, and validity. (p. 165)

Singh and Bajpal (2008) also offered advice on how to operationalize concepts. Making a definition operational, for the purpose of research, limits the meaning of a word and provides a definition that is "more specific than those used in ordinary discourse," "ensures clarity" as to what is being tested, assessed, compared, observed, or measured, and is "based on the observable characteristics of that which is being defined. The word 'observable' is the significant word in describing an operational definition" (Singh & Bajpal, p. 112).

An "operational definition can be constructed in terms of the operations that must be performed to cause the phenomenon or state…. " (Singh & Bajpal, p. 113). With regards to the definition of *shaman* operationalized in this dissertation, social designation must occur before someone can be considered a practicing shaman.

In addition, an operational definition can also be "constructed in terms of how that particular object or thing being defined operates, that is, what it does or what constitutes its dynamic properties" (Singh & Bajpal, p. 113). The dynamic properties of a shaman include spiritual practice, obtaining information, voluntarily regulating attention, and providing benefits to the community. These actions and creative processes can be observed and described, then compared to observable characteristics of contemporary artists. Because *altered states* and *consciousness* is problematic

An operational definition can also be constructed based on static properties such as "qualities, traits, or characteristics," specifying "static or internal qualities rather than… behavior…." (Singh & Bajpal, p. 113). With regards to shamans, for example, personality traits, purported psi abilities, and artistic talent could be considered internal qualities. These properties are more abstract than dynamic properties. Internal qualities, like personality, can be assessed through established instruments. Artistic talent can be assessed through a critique of creative products. I would argue, however, that when discussing human qualities, traits, or characteristics, there is often change and development over time.

Hereafter, I describe the process of operationalizing this study's definition of *shaman.* This description provides an example of how to operationalize a concept.

The definition of *shaman* will be reduced to component parts consisting of construct groups. Then, each construct group will be operationalized through a logical process involving established definition methods, including analysis, context, and example (Shaw, 1922). Multiple examples, from different traditional shamanic societies, will be provided. Because several disciplines contributed to shamanic studies as well as studies on artists, advanced concepts are introduced and elucidated as recommended by Kenny (2010b). Key terms go through a similar process of definition and discussion.

Definition Process as Research Method

I now explain the process of definition as a research method, describing methods to be employed. The strength of this study depends, in part, on the definition of *shaman* and on the operationalization of definientia – a task overlooked by many previous studies.

Shaw (1922) listed six methods by which definitions can be explicitly formulated, through etymology, analysis, exclusion, example, analogy, and context. In definition through etymology, the origin and development of a word is explored to discover meaning. Definition by analysis is considered the "most valuable" and "indispensable" method (p. 143). Analysis explains "the meaning of a term by setting forth the essential characteristics of the thing that the term represents. A statement of these characteristics may include a description of its appearance, its parts, its origin, and its purpose…." (p. 140). Definition by exclusion eliminates irrelevant and erroneous meanings while also differentiating the construct from synonyms. A definition may be provided through representative examples of the construct. Such examples contribute an "experiential realism," and, as noted by Lakoff (1987), an acknowledgment that "reality places constraints on concepts" (p. xv). To validate the operationalized definition of *shaman,*

examples were chosen from multiple traditional shamanic cultures through data collection. Finally, definition by analogy provides comparisons, synonyms, and similes (Shaw, p. 142).

Comparison Approaches

In Chapters 5 through 9, a series of point-by-point, systematic comparisons are made between shamans and contemporary artists using the operationalized definition of *shaman.* Each construct is defined and then validated through argument by example using data on indigenous and traditional shamans and their communities.

Next, archival data are reviewed for shamanlike properties in artists as present in the "four P's" of creativity (Barron, 1988; Richards, 1981; Taylor, 1988), with regards to creative persons, processes, products, and the influences of environmental press that may be evident in a variety of personality traits, actions, intentions, abilities, relationships, inspirations, influences, themes, and so on. Actions used by artists to fulfill constructs defining *shaman* may be the same, similar to, or different than shamans, allowing for nontraditional ways of performing shamanic acts. A basic compare and contrast structure is followed, alternating back and forth in considerations of traditional shamans and contemporary artists.

Properties of artists that are not similar to defining constructs of *shaman* are not considered except to occasionally provide counterexamples or as a means of providing fuller modeling through contrast. Counterexamples heighten contrast and provide greater understanding through a kind of definition by contrast.

Properties related to two, but not all three, categories consisting of artists, shamans, or creative individuals are included as well. The purpose in including such

properties is to show difference or, if disconfirming evidence is not found, to indicate possible areas for future research.

The analysis is primarily focused on determining if properties of contemporary artists fulfill the defining constructs of *shaman.* This study is not intent on identifying individual artists who fulfill all necessary constructs in the definition of *shaman*. Nonetheless, any discovered prototypical examples of shamanic artists who fulfill all constructs are offered.

Note, while subsets of artists may be identified based on a property, trait, belief, experience, practice, etc., that is held in common among all members of the subset, there is no means by which I can quantify the number of contemporary artists who may belong in such subsets. The population of such subsets may be small relative to the entire population of contemporary artists.

Graphic Organizers

Theoretical research relies on the strength of explicitly expressed methods. To make research methods more transparent, organize the process of comparison, and clarify similarities, I utilize graphic organizers, such as Venn diagrams, matrices, and tree diagrams as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1994) as well as pie charts. The use of graphic organizers helps reduce data and becomes part of the analytic procedure.

A pie chart can simply represent which constructs defining shaman were found, with regards to a specific contemporary artist, and which constructs were not found. To qualify as a *shaman,* all constructs must be present as represented in Figure 1.

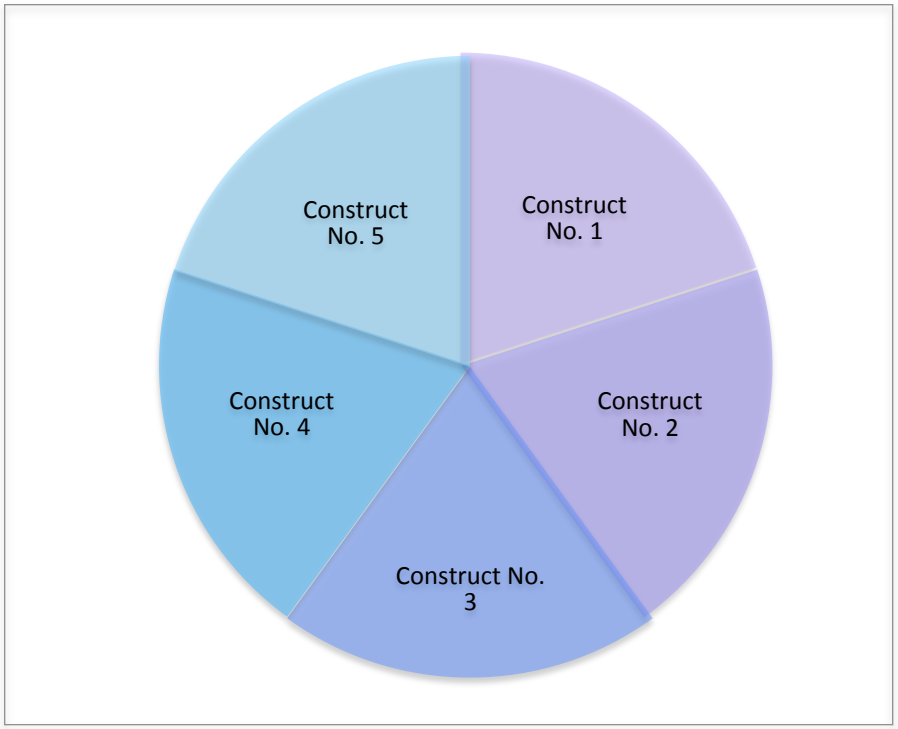


Figure 1. Pie chart example with 5 sectors for 5 constructs.

If an artist under consideration fulfills only some constructs defining *shaman,* then the pie sectors are not all present and do not all fit together. To represent a possible fulfillment of a construct for which adequate data has not been found, the construct pie piece is surrounded by dotted lines. If data considered shows that an artist does not fulfill a construct, then that construct's pie piece will be removed from the pie. An example of an artist that demonstrates some, but not all, constructs defining *shaman* is provided in Figure 2.

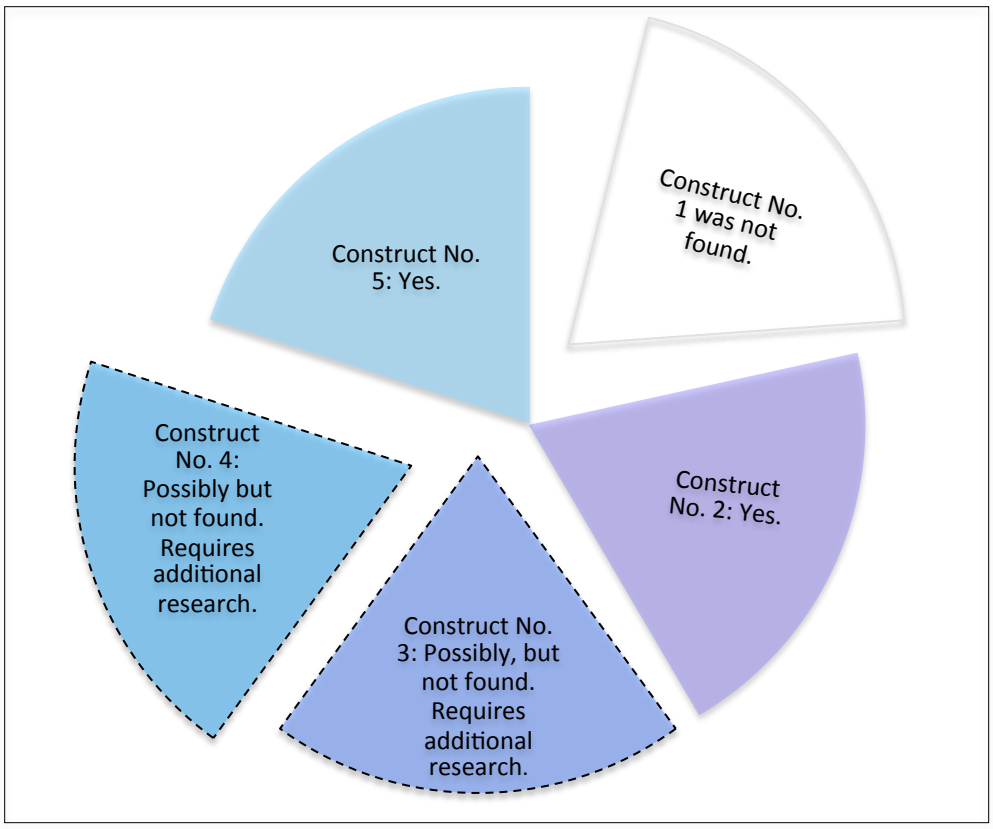


Figure 2. Example of pie chart representing an artist with partial fulfillment of constructs defining *shaman*.

"A matrix is essentially the 'crossing' of two lists, set up as rows and columns" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 93), essentially as a table that will facilitate comparisons between shamans, artists, and data from creativity studies. Because some comparisons might not be fully resolved, there might be data that suggests relationships and begins to form patterns, but does not confirm similarity.

Tables used to present condensed data for the sake of comparisons may be like works in progress, little more than sketches, as opposed to fully rendered forms. Despite the provisional, suggestive quality of some table entries, the tables are presented as working documents that may prove useful to indicate directions and topics for future

research. The tables also show unresolved issues, offer opinions of different researchers, and provide brief discussions.

More complex relationships may be illustrated through a network display, "a collection of 'nodes' or points connected by lines ('links')" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 93).

Venn diagrams may also prove useful for illustrating complex relationships in a simplified manner. While the Venn diagrams will show relationships, differences, and overlapping similarities, the relative scale of sets and subsets are not based on quantitative data indicating the size of populations, number of examples, or quantities of properties found.

Artist and Interdisciplinary Scholar as Researcher

As Korp (1991) recognized, shamanic studies need interdisciplinary researchers with extensive experience in the arts:

> There is little literature on the material culture of shamanism, less on the shaman as artist, and even less than that on the artist as shaman. Given the acknowledged impact of tribal art forms upon the history of Western modern art, this is a curious state of affairs which is only explicable when we realize that few anthropologists have been trained in the analysis of artifacts as visual documents and few art historians have been trained in cultural anthropology. (pp. 258-259)

Perhaps there is another contribution to the "curious state of affairs." Few artists are trained in social science research methods, with sufficient knowledge about shamanism, psychological research on artists, and data from creativity studies.

Interdisciplinary Background

As a multidisciplinary artist, a doctoral candidate in humanistic and transpersonal psychology, a recipient of the graduate level certificate in creativity studies from Saybrook University, a trained diagnostician of psychopathology, with several

professional conference presentations and peer-reviewed publications on the topic of the contemporary artists and shamanism, I am in the position to make important multidisciplinary contributions to our knowledge of artists and shamanism.

For additional information regarding my qualifications as a researcher, including education, overview of art career, scholarly publications, and experience with shamanism, please see Appendix A.

Arts-based Inquiry

As an artist, I am attracted to methods used in arts-based research, also known as art-based inquiry, and art-informed research. These research methods are not commonly thought of as theoretical methods. However, Kenny (2010b) offered this advice: "students writing 'purely' theoretical dissertations may find it useful to take a multi-method approach, in a sense, to reanalyzing and re-interpreting the empirical data that may have been collected by others researchers" (p. 14) and arts-based inquiry offers a meaningful means of reanalyzing, reinterpreting, and representing data.

The research process can be informed by many different kinds of art, produced by different kinds of artists, and presented in a variety of forms.

> Form as procedural element and emergent phenomenon means that elements of form may change over time as the inquiry matures or develops and as ideas evolve. Inspiration for form may come at the outset and drive an inquiry. Inspiration may also present itself in various ways at any point in the research process; often it is because of implicit or metaphorical connections that become evident while immersed in the inquiry process. Inspiration may have rational, reasoned sources or it may be happenstance, serendipitous. It is at these times that the researcher's full depth of professional experience and perspective come into play. The researcher is, after all, the instrument of form. (Cole & Knowles, 2008, p. 63)

As a researcher, I welcome insight, intuition, unbridled and targeted imagining, emergent process, serendipity, and subjectivity – all may be revealed in a reflexive

research presence. As an artist, I may speak from my own experience. I am a "native" in the community of artists and a member of the art audience. However, art-informed research is not necessarily autobiographical and I am not the primary focus of the study.

The arts, whether literary or visual, provide an additional means of data exploration and presentation in addition to the academically written research report of methods, definitions, comparisons, results, discussion, and interpretation. Creating works of art were an integral part of this dissertation process, providing a means of developing and articulating ideas, discovering relationships, and enhancing transparency in the research report – from the perspective of a professional, practicing artist.

I intentionally composed this dissertation with aesthetic dimensions. Whereas most art-informed research is founded upon specific art forms that structure the entire inquiry process (Cole & Knowles, 2008), my study was designed in the waving snakelike forms, coming and going from art to science, intuition to logic, and back again with a fluid continuity and deliberate rhythm.

To maintain the rigor of the study, the artistic elements are clearly identifiable as art. For example, stories based on this artist-researcher's personal experience are recognizable due to the inclusion of first person singular pronouns or stories are labeled as such in the text.

Story. In the presentation of qualitative research, there are several styles. Like positivist research, there may be an author's voice that is omniscient or research may be presented impersonally as though the author is absent. In contrast, as Tierney (1997) commented, "in an age many describe as postmodern we develop experimental voices that expand the range of narrative strategies. In doing so, we underscore how authorial

voice translates research narratives, and we move away from a linear view of time" (p. 23).

Because a dissertation is primarily text, I integrate forms of art that are word based such as poetry and story. "Storytelling (including narrative song) was the principle medium for passing on a culture's knowledge and traditions for many thousands of years in human history. Story gives meaning and importance to learnings...." (Carroll, 1997).

In story, embodied ideas are dynamically enacted through phenomenological examples that create researcher/author-reader/audience relationships, potentially resonating with meaning long after the telling has ended. Lee Maracle (1992), of the Canadian Métis, wrote:

> Academicians waste a great deal of effort deleting character, plot, and story from theoretical arguments. By referring to instances and examples, previous human interaction, and social events, academics convince themselves of their own objectivity and persuade us that the story is no longer a story…it takes a lot of work to delete the emotional and passionate self from story, to de-humanize story into 'theory'. So we don't do it. We humanize theory by fusing humanity's need for common direction-theory-with story. (pp. 88-89)

Poetry. In research, poetry can play several roles. Poetry in presentation of data can provide an emotionally evocative integration of disparate elements that allows multiple interpretations (Leavy, 2008; Rasberry, 2002). Data from multiple sources may be integrated into a poem, offering a kind of unified collective experience to the reader (Gannon, 2001) in a display of "a condensed set of data" with "compelling flow" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 110). Leavy found that poetry created "sensory scenes" that are "artistically expressed as in a heightened state" (p. 64), opening a door to a different kind of data reception. Poetry may also present autoethnographic data, providing a means of reflection for the researcher (Ricci, 2003), and I would add, for you – the reader – as well.

I believe that a poem's mystery and ambiguity invites the reader to actively engage in meaning making through creative collaboration between reader and poem. To achieve understanding, the reader must engage the poem, relate to the poem, invite the poem into reverie, and float along a stream of associations from which meaning is created. As Leavy (2008) noted, "poems reject static or unitary meaning and instead reveal *multiple* meanings" (p. 69).

Thus, poems can present data, in a nonlinear structure, without attempting to mandate what your conclusions should be. Inside the text of a research report, poems offer opportunities to access alternate realities through poetic ways of being, knowing, and understanding. Langer (1953) commented that poems "constitute a purely and completely experienced reality, a piece of virtual life" (p. 212). When prose is inadequate for communicating meaning, a poem may be more successful (Faulkner, 2005). As the poem resonates within a reader, history, emotions, sensations, memories, and thoughts are evoked and creatively synthesized in meaning.

There are several established methods for using poetry in the presentation of research data. "Found poems" are created from words, phrases, or themes found in the literature review or within other data such as interviews (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Prendergast, 2004). Herein, selected quotes from artists are presented in a poetic manner that resembles concrete poetry, "In essence, works of concrete poetry are as much pieces of visual art made with words as they are poems. Were one to hear a piece of concrete poetry read aloud, a substantial amount of its effect would be lost" (Academy of American Poets, 1997-2012).

When typographical lines of poetry are deliberately arranged to suggest visual images, dialogues, or multiple perspectives, concrete poems can provide another layer of meaning and experience for the reader. The division of a quote into lines of poetry can emphasize certain words, highlight relationships, and suggest rhythms comprised of cadence, sound, and silence. The poetry interspersed within this dissertation invites you to linger, savor, deeply engage, make meaning, and arrive at a personal interpretation.

Poetry is also subtly present when the academic writing style suddenly transforms into a more lyrical style or when metaphors are introduced.

I reserve the right to utilize my artistic license and modify certain elements of American Psychological Association (APA) style as well as dissertation format requirements of Saybrook University, such as line spacing, margin width, or fonts, as needed for the expressive visual design of poetry.

Visual art and design. In anthropology, visual images initially provided a source of data and a means of data presentation (Holm, 2008) primarily through sketches, photographs, and films. Later, the value of visual fine arts, as a method of data presentation, was recognized (Collier & Collier, 1996). Visual arts "can evoke particular kinds of emotional and visceral responses from their perceivers; they are typically filed in the subconscious without the same conscious interpretive process people engage in when confronted with a written text" (Leavy, 2008, pp. 215-216).

A visual image can function like an epigraph (2010), by suggesting a theme or addressing the perceiver directly. DeShell (1997) described the liminal place and function of an epigraph, as being "*both* inside and outside" and residing "at the outskirts or in the margins of the text" (p. 106). Similarly, the presence of visual art forms a hybrid or

liminal "third space" which exists as text-and-image, meeting and interacting, forming a relationship between subjective and objective (Sava & Nuutinen, 2003) on a single page that resides at the intersection of research and art. In this regard, the selective "use of visual images is not a luxury or add-on to scholarship but, in many situations, essential," (S. Weber, 2008, p. 44). At times, visual art is integrated with poetry.

Inasmuch as ProQuest Dissertations may now include full color reproductions of images both online and in print (ProQuest, 2011), images of artwork will be inserted within the text. These images are works of art created by me, works by other artists in the public domain generally obtained through Wikimedia Commons, or images that photographers granted me the right to use in this dissertation.

Audience considerations. In arts-based inquiry, consideration for readers motivates the inclusion of art. Cole and Knowles (2008) believed that art-informed research should:

> Involve the reader/audience in an active process of meaning making that is likely to have transformative potential…. The use of the arts in research is not for art's sake. It is explicitly tied to moral purposes of social responsibility and epistemological equity. Relying on the power of art to both inform and engage, the research text is explicitly intended to evoke and provoke emotion, thought, and action. (p. 62)

With beneficial intent, the integration of art into research makes the presentation of multiple interrelationships, metaphors, and open symbols possible. You are invited to engage in a kind of creativity that contributes to the meaning making process, potentially enlarging and enriching the personal relevance of the research. Instead of only reading about art "in the abstract," you might *live* some of the art experiences described herein or discover art experiences unique to you.

Denita Benyshek,
A Woman in the Opera Audience,
detail from *Deep in the Perfumed Night,* reversed-detail, watercolor and ink.

Construction of Descriptive Theoretical Models

As Kenny (2010b) noted, "Theory involves explanation, not description" (p. 3) and explanation is the most common, necessary construct provided in definitions of *theory.* Theories explain by giving "coherent, plausible reasons why things occur the way they do" (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 90) making "complicated things understandable by showing how their component parts fit together according to some rules – that is, *theory*..." (p. 90).

But, prior to this study, most "component parts" of shamanic artists, such as childhood experiences, signs of calling to shamanism, purported relationships with spirits, cosmological beliefs, forms of social designation, etc., had not been identified as parts of the multifaceted, complex processes that create artists. Before theory can be built, researchers need to know what they are explaining. The purpose of this study is to

provide a descriptive model that can provide data for future research that is theoretical in nature.

A theoretical model is:

> A graphic, theoretical, or other type of representation of a concept…. or of basic behavioral and bodily processes that can be used for various investigative and demonstrative purposes, such as enhancing understanding of the concept, proposing hypotheses, showing relationship, or identifying epidemiological patterns…. (VandenBos, 2009, p. 302)

Individual artists who exemplify a prototypical artist-shaman, meeting all necessary conditions of *shaman*, are described – *if* such artists are found. Also, if a subset of artists can fulfill necessary conditions defining *shaman,* then synthesis creates an integrated, prototypical model of the artist as shaman. If some, but not all, shamanic properties are discovered in artists, then a different model is constructed to demonstrate how artists *could* serve as shamans, describing properties that would need to be developed.

Research Methods: Chapter Summary

Do properties of some contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman*? A review of archival data revealed that this question was not adequately answered by previous studies and the understanding of relationships between contemporary artists and shamans was incomplete or even misleading, sometimes due to flawed research methods. This situation underscores the importance of designing rigorous research methods to apply to comparisons of contemporary artists to shamans. With the exception of only one flawed study considering prehistoric artists and shamans, data from creativity studies has not been utilized in studies comparing artists with shamans. These problems created an opportunity for a study with well-constructed,

explicit research methods, an operationalized and validated definition of *shaman,* and systematic comparisons integrating the psychology of creativity.

At this point in the research trajectory on contemporary artists and shamanism, theoretical modeling and archival research methods are appropriate. A theoretical model will supply a well-constructed foundation upon which future research can be built, filling in gaps in knowledge, correcting errors, and synthesizing heretofore-untapped studies from many disciplines. The research method was deliberately constructed to avoid – to the extent possible – Western centrism and other forms of bias. Archival methods will provide data regarding many artists and shamans, from different eras, locations, social conditions, and cultures. The quantity of existing data on artists and shamans is more than adequate for this study, providing a wealth of examples for comparing properties of artists to operationalized constructs defining *shaman*. The researcher is a contemporary artist and arts-based inquiry research methods will also contribute to the collection, interpretation, and presentation of data.

Why is this Research Important?

Heinze (1997) understood that shamans provide for psychological, social, and spiritual needs arising from their communities and its members. If some contemporary artists are practicing shamanism or elements of shamanism, whether deliberately or intuitively, then these artists might also be providing for the needs of their art audiences.

An enhanced understanding of the shamanic or shamanlike creative processes of contemporary artists might improve the healing efficacy of their artworks. Moreover, art audiences might also become more aware of shamanic processes in their art experiences, become more open to receiving the gifts and benefits offered by shamanic art.

The Shamans Practice

Chapter 4: Definitions

The process of defining constructs is an essential component of research. Bishop and Hardin (2006) recognized how:

> The development of science is a collaborative endeavor, in which the community of scientists review, critique, test, and build upon each others' work. Therefore, it is crucial that the concepts are as clearly defined as possible to reduce any ambiguity in understanding the given concept or set of concepts. Although it is not possible to eliminate perceived differences in meaning entirely, offering explicit definitions can minimize these differences. (pp. 38-39)

In addition, explicit definitions guide the selection of archival documents and contribute to the process of comparing artists to shamans. The major constructs of this study are *art, artist, art audience, community, contemporary, creativity* (including *eminent creativity*) and *everyday creativity* (with the subsets of *low C, middle C,* and *pro-C creativity*)*, psi, shaman, shamanic community, shamanic*, *shamanlike, shamanistic,* and *spiritual.*

In the process of operationalizing *art* and *shaman*, I considered the historical trajectory of these complex concepts with attending definition problems and controversies. Concepts from cognitive linguistics and set theory were applied to the operationalized definitions of *art* and *shaman*, including classical categories, fuzzy sets, family resemblance, and gradation of membership. A narrative shares how the definition of *shaman* developed, based upon an initial definition offered by psychologist Stanley Krippner. Finally, the next steps in the research process are explained.

Art

For the purposes of this study, *art* generally refers to those endeavors considered fine art, including visual arts, performing arts, and literature. The commonly used definition of *art* usually refers to the fine arts; that is, “modes of expression that use skill

or imagination in the creation of aesthetic objects, environments, or experiences that can be shared with others" (Arts, 2009). This definition of *art* is culture specific (Adajian, 2007; Bowman, 2006), historical (Martindale, 1999a), and recently developed, starting in the 18th century (Adajian, 2007).

Problems Defining *Art*: Considerations of Class and Culture

Associated with the upper classes within capitalist societies, part of the history of fine art includes symbolic display of membership in a leisure class art-world (Veblen, 1899/1994). This dominant culture, wealthy and powerful, established a hierarchy of art (Bourdieu, 1984) that privileged fine art over craft, urban arts over folk art, classical forms over popular culture. The acquisition of good taste and the appreciation of fine art stood in opposition to engagement with creations that were "associated with action, use, economic value, social meaning, and bodily gratification" (Bowman, 2006, p. 6). However, for the purposes of this study, these hierarchies of value were set aside so that multiple forms of art could be considered, including popular culture, crafts, and applied (decorative) arts.

The broad definition of *art* is made with full awareness of arguments regarding the ever-evolving, contested, and unresolved definition of art. "As a matter of historical fact, there simply is no stable *definiendum* for a definition of art" (M. Weber, 1968).

Also beyond the boundaries of fine art are traditional shamanic "arts," material culture objects such as ceremonial tunics "decorated" with elaborate symbols that are believed to be activated during ritual dances. The same garment might be worn during public performances on festival stages, acquired by collectors, or statically exhibited within thermoplastic boxes in ethnographic museums and art museums. Each step away

from original ritual and social contexts results in further dissociation and the tunic's integrated complex of meaning, mythology, mystery, spirituality, imagination, magical intent, and beneficial functions are soon lost.

In addition, despite the West's partial acceptance of shamanic material culture as art and despite methods by which the West transforms shamanic material culture into art, most traditional shamanic cultures do not have the concept *fine art*. Soffer and Conkey (1997) explained:

> As defined in the past century, art is a cultural phenomenon that is assumed to function in what we recognize and carve off separately as the aesthetic sphere.... This aesthetic function is something that we cannot assume to have been the case in prehistory. In fact, ethnographic data from nonwestern cultures clearly show us otherwise; most such cultures do not make the kinds of distinctions that we do, they do not have an equivalent term for 'art' nor do they often differentiate the aesthetic from the symbolic from the sacred from the utilitarian, and so on.... (p. 2)

While the concept of art is not present in all cultures, the concept of aesthetics is found globally. Washburn (2006) shared:

> I have explored culturally mediated perceptions and conceptions of beauty and found that non-Western peoples not only see beauty in the visible appearance of objects, but also in the beliefs and practices permeating daily living linked to the cosmological principles that define them as a people. (p. 72)

While recognizing the validity and importance of this viewpoint, beautiful beliefs and daily practices are excluded from the operationalized definition of art being constructed herein. However, future research could consider how beautiful beliefs and practices comprise a kind of everyday creativity that incorporates a highly developed aesthetic sensibility.

Studying the anthropology of art, Hatcher (1999) found:

> That many languages do not have a word that can be translated 'art' and may or may not have a related concept, only means that the conceptual system of that society does not include the word, and may or may not include the concept. This

> does not invalidate the use of the term for cultural products of that society for comparative purposes... (p. 8)

Therefore, using Hatcher's argument, the word *art* will also refer to aesthetically designed objects as well as actions similar to performing arts.

Morales (2005) acknowledged that *art* was often considered a "nonutilitarian, purely aesthetic pursuit, whereas, prehistoric visual expression served an important utilitarian function – it is a social vital *text* of sorts…." (p. 65). Although Umatilla tribal elders decried *art* as a misnomer for Native American petroglyphs and pictographs (Morales, p. 64), contemporary Wintu Nation artist, Frank LaPena, honored the creations as art through an expanded definition that embraced spiritual concerns:

> Rock art is aesthetically some of the finest work ever done. It continues to fascinate and relate to contemporary times because philosophically it gives us a vision of a living earth balanced with both the spiritual and physical in harmony. (Morales, 2005, p. 65)

Speaking from an Aboriginal perspective, Mowaljarlai (Mowaljarlai, Vinnicombe, Ward, & Chippindale, 1988) stated, "We have never thought of our rock paintings as 'Art'. To us they are IMAGES, IMAGES with ENERGIES that keep us ALIVE – EVERY PERSON, EVERYTHING WE STAND ON, ARE MADE FROM, EAT AND LIVE ON." For Mwaljarlai, the utilitarian function and spiritual meaning of Aboriginal rock paintings precludes their definition as art whereas LaPena does not split aesthetic value from spiritual function.

Previous Proposals to Resolve Problems Defining *Art*

Gombrich (1995), an art historian, dissolved the classically bounded definition of art and suggested an alternate perspective integrating utilitarian functions:

> If… we mean by art some kind of luxury, something to enjoy in museums and exhibitions or something special to use as a precious decoration in the best parlour, we must realize that this use of the word is a very recent development and

> that many of the greatest builders, painters or sculptors of the past never dreamed of it…. [We] are not likely to understand the art of the past if we are quite ignorant of the aims it had to serve…not as something nice to look at, but as something powerful to use. (p. 39)

Morales (2005) remarked, "there is little reason to assume that simply *being prehistoric* somehow means *being pre-art"* (p. 70). Recognizing that art served utilitarian purposes for many centuries, even eons, Morales recommended research that considers "the concept of art and the many ways in which art has functioned throughout human history" (p. 70), concluding:

> To acknowledge the aesthetic considerations manifested in, for example, American Indian art is not to deny the art's communicative, functional or spiritual significance. In fact, it serves to place it alongside the most meaningful expressions of Western cultures. Coming to terms with the art-ness of rock art complements the understanding of prehistoric and non-Western visual expression and enlightens the overall conception of art as a pan-cultural human phenomenon. (p. 71)

Avant-Garde Redefinitions of *Art*

In many ways, artists have been in the vanguard of redefining art. The French artist, Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968) confronted and violated the boundaries of fine art with his ready-mades. Common, mass produced objects, isolated or combined in assemblages, were exhibited in fine art settings. A survey of 500 British art experts deemed Duchamp's sculpture, entitled *Fountain*, the most influential artwork of the 20th century (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2004). Prior to being reclassified as art by Duchamp, *Fountain* was a white porcelain urinal.

Similarly, the distinction between fine arts and crafts has been questioned and erased by artwork in media previously relegated to the crafts such as large story quilts with questions on race and gender in art, sewn and painted by African-American Faith Ringgold (Cameron, 1998), monumental ceramic portraits by European American Viola

Frey (Larsen, 1988), and large scale glass installations by European American Dale Chihuly (Sims, 1992).

Art as a Fuzzy Set and Overarching, Operationalized Definition

Because of the disagreements regarding the definition of *art* and because of the many violations of boundaries surrounding the classical category of fine art, the operationalized definition of *art* is conceptualized as a fuzzy set wherein different art objects have a family resemblance but might not all possess the same properties (Martindale, 1999a). The definition is deliberately polyphonous in the sense used by literary critic Bakhtin (Sims, 1992), in reference to novels by Dostoevsky, as "a plurality of independent and unmerged voices and consciousnesses, a genuine polyphony of fully valid voices" (p. 7).

Nonetheless, the core, overarching operationalized definition of *art* remains synonymous with the fine arts although other forms of art may be considered if relevant. For example, material culture objects that are crafted for utilitarian and spiritual purposes are considered outlying representatives in an overlapping gray zone between fine art, craft, and objects with spiritual purposes or magical intent. These objects, in the mid 21st century, started to be exhibited in fine art museums and became admired for their aesthetic qualities.

In the artistic tradition of questioning the definition and boundaries of art, this study may also expand, challenge, and redefine what art can be.

Artist

Most simply, an *artist* is an individual who creates art. The relevant definitions of *artist,* provided by *The Oxford English Dictionary* (2011), encompass both "fine artists"

and "interpretive artists": "A person skilled in one of the creative or fine arts" as well as "A person skilled in any of the fine arts; (now more generally) a person who practices any creative art in which accomplished execution is informed by imagination." In addition, the concept *artist* may also include "A person skilled in the art of music; a performer of music in public, as a singer, player, conductor, etc.… A public performer or entertainer… a person skilled in dramatic art; an actor," and "A person skilled in a visual art, as painting, drawing, sculpture, etc." This definition of artist, provided by *The Oxford English Dictionary*, serves as the overarching definition for this study.

Martindale (1999a) used definition by example and by analysis, stating that an artist is "A creator such as poet, painter, or composer who produces novel artifacts that are accepted as works of art" (p. 115). Within this definition of artist, examples can include poet Sylvia Plath, painter Agnes Martin, choreographer Martha Graham, or composer Pauline Oliveros. Martindale's definition of *artist* is materialistic, primarily limited to originating producers of tangible art objects.

However, for the purposes of this study, *artist* also included interpretive creative acts performed by musicians, actors, and dancers. While works of art such as oil paintings or novels may be experienced directly by the audience, symphonies and plays require the creativity of gifted performers to provide the audience with art experience. Further, each performance is novel and expressive, dependent on an interpretive artist's innate gifts and refined skills.

When I read Shakespeare's (1603-1623/1901) play *Hamlet,* I experienced the play as literature; however, when I watched the film version of *Hamlet,* directed by Laurence Olivier (1948), the script was transformed into theatre through the artistry of gifted

acting, such as Eileen Herlie's portrayal of the character Queen Gertrude. Thus, within the proposed study, artists may include performers.

Recognizing that assumptions about creativity, *vis-à-vis* originality, often exclude traditional crafts from the perspective of privileging an individualist view of society as opposed to values in communalist societies (Bohlman, 1988; Netti, 1983), folk artists and traditional, indigenous artists were also included.

Martindale (1999a) recognized that, like art, the concept "artist" is a "fuzzy set" (p. 119) with artists identified by typical characteristics: an artist is an organism who creates "novel artifacts" considered art. In this definition, novelty is highly important. Yet, novelty must be situated socially, historically, and culturally because judgments and valuation of novelty or innovation vary between cultures (Martindale, 1999a).

Art Audience

For the sake of this study, *art audience* refers to a group of individuals who experience art, whether through direct experience or via reproduction.

The term "audience" can refer to "a group of listeners or spectators" (2002) and may designate "a group of persons assembled to hear and see a speaker, a play, a concert" or "all those persons who read what one writes or hear what one says; one's public" (Audience, 2009a).

Smith (1999) appreciated the irony inherent in attempts to define audience, writing the "more we define audience, the less we can appreciate its true complexity. The more complex our understanding of audience, the less we are able to create a useful, manageable definition" (p. 1).

Considering the variations in audiences throughout history and across different cultures, Reiff (1996) stated that "Audience is an unstable referent, a floating signifier" (p. 407) due to multiple meanings of the term. Nonetheless, for the purposes of this study, an operationalized definition of *art audience* was required.

Denita Benyshek, *Deep in the Perfumed Night.* From *The Opera Sketchbooks*.
A woman in the audience at the opera, *Tosca,* listening with closed eyes.

McQuail (1997) wrote:

> Audiences are both a product of social context (which leads to shared cultural interests, understandings, and information needs) and a response to a particular pattern of media provision. Often they are both at the same time….
>
> An audience can thus be defined in different and overlapping ways: by *place* (as in the case of local media); by *people* (as when a medium is characterized by an appeal to a certain age group, gender, political belief, or income category); by the

> particular type of *medium* or *channel* involved (technology and organization combined); by the *content* of its messages (genres, subject matter, styles); by *time* (as when one speaks of the "daytime" or the "prime-time" audience, or an audience that is fleeting and short term compared to one that endures). These opening remarks are sufficient to illustrate how this simple term embodies many ambiguities. (p. 2)

The invention of the printing press resulted in an audience of readers dispersed in time and space. The experience of the literary arts became a private, individual experience. The invention of film and the construction of theatres for viewing films once again provided a group audience experience in a single location, while at the same time, creating the first mass audience. Television broadcast technology, cable television, and the worldwide web further expanded audience numbers while, again, dispersing audience members.

Therefore, the idea of audience was argued to be a fiction (Crowley, 1990, p. 29). For example, a work of fiction or poetry is not experienced by one collective group, meeting in the same space at the same time (Long, 1980). From this perspective, an idealized audience, universal and monolithic, cannot exist. Even within one community, multiple interpretations of an artwork occur (Piturro, 2008).

In contrast, the concept of "discourse communities," developed by Rafoth (1990), embraced both the individual *and* the collective through seeing the audience as a group sharing expectations, with shared participation, and "commonly (or communally) held ways" (p. 145) of expression, developed by a dialogic relationship between writers and readers. Here, consistency of position in space and time is irrelevant.

Yet, if we return to the comparatively simple dictionary definitions of audience, I believe it is possible to define audience *both* as a bounded group *and* as many individuals with differing, subjective responses to experiences of art. From this perspective, there can

be an audience with a single, common, defining property - for example, readers of a science fiction novel by feminist writer Ursual Le Guin – and within this audience are many different individuals in many different nations, reading the same novel at different times.

Community

A community is “a unified body of individuals” with “common interests” and an “infinite web of connection” (Amit & Rapport, 2002, p. 17), rich with thick meanings, emotionally potent, comforting as a haven, with solutions to problems (Gold, 2005), and based on the subjective sense of belonging which “combines both affective and cognitive components, both a feeling of solidarity and an understanding of shared identity" (Brow, 1990, p. 1).

The English word “community” originated in the Latin *munus,* which indicated “service or duty, gift, and sacrifice” (McGinnis, House, & Jordan, 1999, p. 213). Thus, community is a metaphor:

> At its root is the idea of an exchange of services – out of duty, it may be, but also pointing to another dimension of the idea, freely, even affectionately, as a gift, or even a sacrifice. A community, then, is the assemblage of individuals to whom one is bound by this kind of relationship – one defined, we might even say constituted, by mutual obligation and by an exchange of gifts. (McGinnis et al., p. 213)

Contemporary

In this study, the industrial revolution, as marked by Watt’s invention of the steam engine in 1775 C.E. (Hulse, 1999), serves as the beginning of the contemporary era. The contemporary time period extends to the present day. Thus, the population of contemporary artists was delimited to artists who created art after 1775 C.E.

Creativity

Creativity is a dynamic process in which "creators think, feel, experience, motivate and direct themselves, and behave related to the generation of original and meaningful creative outcomes" (Richards, 1999b, p. 733), requiring certain kinds of cognition (Guilford, 1967; Runco & Sakamoto, 1999; Russ, 1993; Ward, Smith, & Finke, 1999), personality traits (Sternberg, 1985), and motivation (Amabile, 1983; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996). The creative process can result in adaptation and regeneration (Richards, 2000-2001), self actualization (Maslow, 1971), or a fulfillment of human potential (May, 1975), which can be expressed through an individual, society, or culture (Csikszentmihalyi, 1994, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi & Sawyer, 1995; Simonton, 1988).

The category *creativity* was divided into a number of sets and subsets by different researchers proposing related yet somewhat different models. Kaufman and Beghetto (2009) recognized that *creativity* was typically dichotomized into *everyday creativity* and *high C creativity.* These two categories are the most fully developed and widely accepted concepts of creativity within the field of psychology and the subfield of creativity studies. Some of the categories and subcategories, used by researchers in their studies of creativity, are set out in Table 1.

Everyday Creativity

Everyday creativity includes a wide span of creative endeavors. For Richards (1999a), everyday creativity includes "the creative person or creative outcome (products, ideas, or behaviors) that involve day-to-day activities at work and during leisure time. These are characterized both by originality… and meaningfulness to others" (p. 683).

Table 1

Spectrums of Categories within Creativity

Creativity				
				Eminent Creativity
	Low C	General Everyday Creativity	Middle C/Pro-c	
Description	Original transformations in small products, thoughts, or expressions.	Day-to-day activities at work or during leisure. Original and meaningful to others. Adapt to changing environment, survival capacity. Contributes to growth, personal development, even transcendence.	Professional-level expertise. Mastery of technique. Interpretive skill and distinctive style. May involve perpetuating traditional culture as seen in many shamanic practices. Successfully achieve technical, practical, commercial, or academic goal. Solid, professional creative contributions. Majority of shamans.	Requires professional-level expertise to make substantial, significant, new contribution.

Range of effect.	Creation might only affect individual creator.		Majority of shamans. Substantial social impact beyond creator's family and friends. Does not transform entire fields or subfields.	Reorganizes a body of knowledge. Transforms domain of knowledge, subfields, or fields.
Training	No training or minimal training required.		On average, requires 10 yrs. of training, mentorship, and/or practice to gain expertise.	On average, requires 10 yrs. of training, mentorship, and/or practice to gain expertise.
Examples	A child's flower arrangement of dandelions and fern fronds for a backyard play house.		Professional Artists Master of ikebana, traditional Japanese spiritual art form of flower arrangement. Christian Morrisseau (Ojibwe/Cree) painter in Woodlands School of Art. Son of Norval Morrisseau. Majority of artists.	Professional Artists In 19th century, Unshin Ohara invented a contemporary style of ikebana known as moribana. When the traditional school would not allow him to teach moribana, he founded the Ohara School to train practitioners. In 20th century, artists Norval Morrisseau (Ojibwe) and Carl Ray (Cree) invented new style of art, the Woodlands School of Art also known as Legend Art or Medicine Art. Morrisseau now has an international reputation.

Everyday creativity is a "survival capability – representing the 'phenotypic plasticity' that allows humans to adapt to changing environments – and a humanistic force in ongoing growth, personal development, and even transcendence" (Richards, 1999a, p. 684).

As a set, everyday creativity can be divided into subsets. These subsets distinguish points on the spectrum of creativity. Everyday creativity is a broad category reaching beyond leisure activities and "extend[ing] from mini-c to little-c through Pro-c" creativity (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009, p. 6), including middle C creativity as well.

Low C creativity. Low C creativity is "exemplified by original transformations in small products, thoughts, or expressions. Examples might be a satisfying flower arrangement or a humorous play on words" (Morelock & Feldman, 1999, p. 449).

Middle C and Pro-c creativity. Middle C creativity results in "products appreciated in terms of interpretive skill, mastery of technical forms, distinctive style, and success in achieving a technical, practical, commercial, or academic goal" (Morelock & Feldman, 1999, p. 449). Middle C creativity is likely to be seen in traditional arts where less value is placed on originality and more value is associated with perpetuating a traditional art form as a means of sustaining and supporting traditional culture. Middle C creativity also "refers to creativity in the expression of professional expertise. It is about creative products appreciated for interpretive skill, mastery of technical terms, distinctive style and success in achieving a technical, practical, commercial or academic goal" (Mann & Chan, 2011, p. 7).

Middle C creativity "includes creative acts that have substantial social impact beyond the creative agents' immediate circle of acquaintances, but which do not

transform entire fields or subfields" (Harrington, 2004, p. 180), and generally limited in effect to one organization or a modest sized community (Moran, 2009).

Pro-c creativity, similar to middle C creativity, is a level of professional expertise that is not domain transforming. "Anyone who attains professional-level expertise in any creative area is likely to have attained Pro-c status" (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009, p. 5). Generally, 10 years of training, formal or informal apprenticeship, being mentored, and ongoing practice is required to attain pro-c status.

Middle C and pro-c categories of creativity define sets of individuals that make "solid, professional creative contributions" (Kaufman & Beghetto, 2009, p. 5), but are not eminent creators or geniuses.

High C Creativity and Eminent Creativity

High C creativity or eminent creativity, including the realms of geniuses and eminent creators, involves a "unique reorganization of knowledge resulting in substantial new contributions to bodies of knowledge. Some rare human beings produce creative contributions that are so significant that they utterly transform a domain of knowledge" (Morelock & Feldman, 1999, p. 449).

Psi

Krippner and Friedman (2010a) offered this description of *psi*:

> Parapsychologists use the term *psi* (short for psychic) when referring to reported interactions between organisms and their environment (including other organisms) that appear to transcend the physical and biological demarcations of Western science. (p. 4)

Types of psi are categorized as "remote perception," "remote influence," and "survival of bodily death" (Krippner & Friedman, 2010a, p. 4). Remote perception covers precognition, premonition (Goertzel, 2010), extrasensory perception, clairvoyance, and

telepathy (Krippner & Murphy, 1976). Static objects are believed to be remotely influenced in psychokinesis (Krippner & Friedman, 2010a) while live entities are thought to be influenced during "anomalous healing experiences" (Krippner & Friedman, p. 4). Many anomalous experiences, such as seeing, hearing, or communicating with spirits of ancestors, power animals, or spirits in nature, also qualify as psi.

The veridicality of reported psi talents and experiences as well as results of experimental events, remain subject to considerable debate within the field of parapsychology (Krippner & Friedman, 2010b).

Shaman

For this study, the operationalized definition of *shaman* is: A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention, which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members. Hereafter, I describe the process that developed the operationalized definition.

Process

The strength of this study depended upon a valid, well-founded, globally generalized definition of *shaman.* But, as M. N. Walter (2004) noted, there is an unresolved theoretical issue affecting researchers past and present: How to define shamanism?

Hereafter, I provide a brief overview of problems affecting the previous attempts to operationalize *shaman.* I then consider the etymology of *shaman* to see if origins of the word offer clues to a classical definition that can be generalized to all cultures. Next, I describe the series of events that led to an initial selection of a classically bounded

definition of *shaman* devised by Stanley Krippner, an internationally renowned humanistic psychologist with an extensive list of research publications on shamanism, dreams, altered states of consciousness, parapsychology, and additional topics relevant to the study of shamans. Then, I share the considerations that led to a minor modification of Krippner's initial definition so that the definition "fit" data on shamanism and gender.

Subsequently, the operationalized definition of *shaman* is presented. This definition is then compared with definitions of *shaman* constructed by researchers in previous studies, demonstrating that this study's definition encompasses most defining constructs used by previous researchers. I consider various means of validating the definition. Finally, a list of key construct groups from the operationalized definition of *shaman* is offered.

Problems Defining *Shaman*

Problems attending attempts to define *shaman* are longstanding (Atkinson, 1992). Because shamanism is a social construct, researchers on shamanism offered numerous similar, yet different, definitions of *shaman.* There were debates as to whether a single definition of *shaman* could be globally generalized or if the term *shaman* should be limited to Siberian tribes where the word originated.

Writing early in the 20th century, Shirokogoroff (1935/1982), expressed concern that the word shaman would lose meaning by overly broad generalizations. More recently, Atkinson presented many arguments against a universal definition of shamanism and Bowie (2000) argued in favor of limiting the term *shaman* to practitioners in Siberia, where European explorers first heard the Tungus word.

Furthermore, different languages have words that refer to shamans or, perhaps more accurately, words that refer to individuals who are similar to shamans. Von Falkenhausen (1995) criticized scholars who translated different Chinese words (such as *wu* 巫, *xi* 覡, *yi* 毉, *xian* 仙, and *zhu* 祝) into *shaman*, writing, "The general tendency to refer to all ecstatic religious functionaries as shamans blurs functional differences" (p. 85).

Heppner, Wampold, and Kivlighan (2008) advised researchers to "define constructs to be consistent with prior research so that conclusions about the construct can accumulate. A field can be choked by the proliferation of similar but slightly distinct constructs…." (p. 98). At present, the field of shamanic studies *is* choking on numerous similar, yet different, definitions.

Previously, many researchers (e.g., Halifax, 1983; Heinze, 1997; Lewis, 1984; Piers Vitebsky, 1995; Walsh, 1990; Walter & Neumann Fridman, 2004; Winkelman, 1984) devised definitions of *shaman* that were somewhat similar and somewhat different. Critics focused on how such globally generalized metanarratives of "The Shaman" blurred distinct social roles, failed to recognize specialties, and grew monumental in scope.

Harner (1968/1986) and Eliade (1951/1964) are examples of researchers who constructed popular *shaman* metanarratives, reducing complex phenomena to simple systems that did not accurately describe indigenous shamanism. Several flaws in Eliade's (1951/1964) definition of *shaman* were discussed earlier. Another error made by Eliade was the global generalization of the world tree or axis mundi used by shamans to travel to

upper or lower realms. Despite critiques of Eliade that dismissed the universal existence of the world tree myth, writers continued to quote this detail of Eliade's work.

While Harner's (1968/1986) writing and teaching influenced the development of neoshamanism, Harner received criticism from indigenous individuals who wrote of European American appropriation of shamanism. The "white [Caucasian] shaman" (Berman, 2009; Tucker, 1997) and the "plastic shaman" (Rose, 1992) were not seen as authentic, representative examples.

Gallagher and Ashcraft (2006) criticized the relatively new phenomena of contemporary shamanism or neoshamanism as an "artificial….simulation" and "synthetic alternative" (p. 155) of multiple belief systems, compartmentalizing religion and lifestyle, individually customized, often hedonistically self-absorbed, seeking instant results, and purchased through weekend seminars. Similarly, Noel (1997), a scholar of religion, also opposed cross-cultural amalgamations based on artificial "common denominators" of shamanism created by anthropologists such as Harner.

In Eliade's (1951/1964) and Harner's (1968/1986) metanarratives of shamanism, there is a failure to recognize the importance of specific cultural contexts:

> Any idea, text, information, object, person, place, or experience requires an examination of the cultural group that creates or uses it, the surroundings in which it occurs, its history and connection to traditions, its utility, and its symbolism. This approach is grounded in the idea that meaning is not inherent in any entity but is created through the interaction of that entity with its use…. The context limits the meanings that are possible and also makes it more likely that they can be articulated and understood. (Sullivan, 2009, p. 125)

M. N. Walter (2004) recognized a wide spectrum of shamanlike practitioners, writing:

> A recent anthropological emphasis holds that there is not one universal shamanism, but many shamanisms. The diversity of shamanistic and mediumistic practices in Nepal supports this argument. Although the country's specific ethnic

> groups can each be associated with particular religious or ritual practices, it is more useful to think of these cultural strands as part of the larger Hindu-Buddhist-shamanistic ritual system that is prevalent among the hill communities and reflects Nepal's complex geographical, linguistic, and cultural diversity. General categories such as 'shamanism,' 'spirit possession,' and 'spirit mediumship' fail to reflect the full variety of ways in which ritual practitioners actually operate. (para. 4)

In summary, a primary argument regarding the definition of *shaman* is whether the concept can be generalized to numerous practitioners cross-culturally, that have somewhat differing practices, *or* whether the concept should be culturally limited to the group where the word originated. This dilemma might be resolved within the field of cognitive linguistics.

Classical Categories and Fuzzy Sets

To determine whether or not contemporary artists fulfill defining constructs of *shaman* requires constructs that can be operationalized and a classical definition. Classical categories have clearly bounded definitions, explained Lakoff (1987), in which all defining properties are shared by all members. Such categories "are sets," according to Lakoff, "defined by common properties of objects" (p. 10). Because of the shared properties, all members have equal status as representatives of the category and no members are "better examples of the category than any other members" (Lakoff, p. 7). If someone or something does not display all defining properties, then that person or thing cannot be placed in that category. The classical category of *shaman* is a set defined by the common properties found in the operationalized definition.

Further, as the product of positivist philosophy, classical categories are believed to be true and correct. If the operationalized construct *shaman* is defined as a classical category, then someone either is or is not a shaman. Partial or gradated fulfillment of the constructs defining *shaman* is not possible within a strict classical definition.

However, alternate kinds of categories or sets are possible. As described by Lakoff (1987), philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein (1889-1951) originated the idea of "family resemblance" in which "members of a category may be related to one another without all members having any properties in common that define the category" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 12). In addition, as Lakoff noted, "some categories have degrees of membership and no clear boundaries" (p. 12).

In contrast to classical set theory, where something is or is not a member, fuzzy set theory allows for gradated membership (Zadeh, 1996). Instead of the "black or white" determination of classical set theory, fuzzy set theory assesses where membership falls in a range of values, within the gradated scale of gray values between black and white.

In a fuzzy set, central members are prototypes that fulfill all defining constructs. In contrast, non-central members may only fulfill some constructs or have gradated membership. Some members may be better examples of one defining construct yet also be poor examples of other defining constructs. Nonetheless, all members of a fuzzy set have family resemblance (that is, the members all have one or more defining constructs in common). The common constructs may vary across different pairs of members.

The arguments for and against a globally generalized definition of *shaman* can be reduced to the differences between classical categories, family resemblances, and fuzzy sets. There is a perceived need for a single, ideal classical category that facilitates identifying common properties, making comparisons, searching for underlying structures, and determining who qualifies as a shaman.

Yet, there is also a need for a way to represent family resemblances in shamanlike practitioners who have many, but not all, of properties classically defining *shaman.* In

addition, researchers need ways to identify non-central shamanlike practitioners who demonstrate gradated or partial fulfillment of shamanic properties.

For the purposes of this study, the operationalized definition of *shaman* consists of constructs or properties that are possessed by all central members – with the knowledge that there are practitioners who may have gradated or partial membership.

Of course, general categories do not refer to specific practitioners. *Shaman* is like *farmer,* a general category that includes subsets with specific examples. For example, *farmer* is a set that can contain a woman tending a rice paddy by hand in Indonesia, a man who owns a factory hog farm in Oklahoma, and tropical leafcutter ants cultivating edible fungus in their underground garden. Although quite different in their practices and beliefs, all of these individuals are engaged in activities that provide food through animal husbandry or agriculture.

Znamenski (2004) offered his assessment regarding the global occurrence of shamanism:

> In my own effort to frame a workable definition - neither so narrow as to exclude all but the Siberian form, nor so broad as to include all kinds of ecstasy - I have surveyed the evidence, reading generalizations skeptically and paying special attention to close descriptions of actual practice.... verbatim transcriptions from the informants themselves.... Despite the difficulties involved in my research, I finish it convinced that shamanism does recur among tribal people, that it can be defined, and that the word shamanism does denote genuine universalistic practices. (p. 189)

Similarly, Winkelman (1992) performed an empirical, cross-cultural study, using samples from numerous locations. He analyzed the data using quantitative methods and found that shamans practice in traditional societies around the world. “These findings establish that shamanism is a cross-cultural phenomenon, reflecting a specific complex of

characteristics that has been found worldwide in hunter-gatherer and simple pastoral and agricultural societies" (Winkelman, 2011, p. 55).

Considering why the phenomenon of shamanism is found worldwide, Winkelman (2011) provided answers based in neurobiology and evolution. Shamanic practices enhance "individual or community survival by enhancing the ability to integrate information relevant to survival needs, social bonding, and the management of health, particularly stress" (p. 56). Quite possibly, the beliefs and practices of shamanism evolved in response to environmental pressures related to survival that existed worldwide regardless of location.

For the purposes of this study, the definition of *shaman* includes constructs that can be operationalized while avoiding "surplus construct irrelevancies" (cf. Heppner et al., 2008). The definition of *shaman* operationalized herein is applicable cross-culturally, respects the cultural heritage of indigenous peoples, and encompasses variations and subclasses of shamans.

Etymology

As noted by Shaw (1922), an etymological exploration of a word can enhance understanding and comprise part of a definition. The European American word *shaman* is a transliteration of the word *šaman* or *hamman* from the Evenki language (Katzner, 2002; Minahan, 2002) spoken by the Tungus-Mongol, also known as the Tungus-Manchu, people of Siberia (Rapinsky-Naxon, 1993). Tungusic languages are part of the Altaic language group (Columbia Electronic Encyclopedia, 2009), either through genetic relationship or from *sprachbund,* that is, a geographic convergence or a language

crossroads of several languages (Brown, 2005; Tungusic Research Group at Dartmouth College, 1998).

In the early 19th century, the linguistic method for comparing religions traced the origins of *shaman* to Buddhism and the Indo-Aryan languages of India, specifically from *sramana* in Sanskrit or *samana* in Pāli, the sacred language of Theravāda Buddhism (Pāli language, 2010). By 1831, Schatt argued against a Buddhist origin, instead seeing an indigenous source within the Tungusic language (Grim, 1987). The Buryat scholar, Banzarov (1846), followed *shaman* back along a linguistic path that led to a central Asian origin in the Turko-Tartar word *kam*. Polish cultural anthropologist Marie Czaplicka (1884-1921), who led expeditions of researchers into Siberia and performed extended field research, stated that *shaman* is a Tungusic noun and verb. Czaplicka (1914/1999) explained that the noun form means "one who is excited, moved, raised" while the verb form means "to know in an ecstatic manner" (p. 197).

Laufer (1917) noticed that *shaman* has different meanings in Buddhism and Tungusic. According to Laufer, when two words are "physically alike or similar, but fundamentally diverse in meaning" and when the words originate in two "geographically remote languages," one must "assume that the face resemblance is purely accidental" (p. 365). Subsequently, Shirokogoroff (1935/1982) reasserted the Buddhist origin of *shaman.*

Rapinsky-Naxon (1993) explained the etymology of *shaman* through the root *ša*, an Indo-European verb, which means "to know." Rapinsky-Naxon offered "he who knows" as the gender-specific, etymological translation of *šaman.* Perhaps Rapinsky-Naxon's androcentric interpretation of *ša* is inaccurate as *The Encyclopædia Britannica*

(Shaman, 2010) translated *ša* as "one who knows" although it is possible that the encyclopedia is deliberately using a non-gendered translation.

At present, the linguistic source of *shaman* remains undetermined. Different interpretations of the etymological meaning of *shaman* offer meager hints of meaning, such as seeing, knowing (Rapinsky-Naxon, 1993), ecstatic knowing, and being excited, moved, or raised (Czaplicka, 1914/1999). The etymology of *shaman* does not provide a definition that is adequately descriptive, delimiting, or capable of being operationalized.

Dialogue and Definition Process

I asked Stanley Krippner to recommend an operational definition of shaman. Krippner recognized the field's need for an accurate definition, comprised of necessary conditions, without surplus irrelevancies, that could be generalized globally.

S. Krippner (personal communication, January 12, 2010) then created an initial definition of shaman: "A shaman is a socially designated practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to his/her peers, through voluntary regulation of his/her attention, and uses that information for the benefit of the community and its members." Krippner noted that every word in the definition could be operationalized.

S. Krippner (personal communication, January 12, 2010) rejected the phrase, "altered states of consciousness" (ASC) as redundant. Instead, Krippner used "voluntary regulation of his/her attention" because "attentional states" occur "during the day -- in Nature, with a client" and are not necessarily limited to "dreams, dancing, drugs, drumming, or more dramatic ways of shifting attention."

I noticed that Krippner's definition referred to a shaman's "peers." *Peer* (2010) refers to "one belonging to the same societal group" – not to the entire society. To be a

peer, one possesses some differentiating quality such as "age, grade, or status" (Peer). Concerned that readers might assume "peers" meant other shamans, I suggested "peers" be replaced by "community." Previously, Krippner (1991) referred to "community" several times in an extended definition of *shaman.* The concept *community* also played in important role in the Heinze (1997) definition of shaman. S. Krippner (personal communication, January 12, 2010) agreed with my suggestion.

Art Bohart (personal communication, May 9, 2011) recommended making the type of practitioner more specific. Then Krippner specified "spiritual" practitioner. He also referred to shamans as spiritual practitioners in an earlier definition (Krippner, 2004e).

Gender Problem

The operationalized definition of shaman includes the concepts *his* and *her* within the phrase "for the benefit of his or her community." The English pronouns *his* and *her* refer to gender as a set of binary opposites. The initial definition implied that there are two genders of shamans, *his* and *her,* masculine and feminine.

However, some shamanic Native American societies recognize 3rd and 4th genders (Roscoe, 2000) such as "two spirit" (Lang, 1998). Gender is one of the factors used by traditional societies to determine who can become a shaman (Krippner, 2002a). According to Guo Chen (personal communication, October 8, 2011), editor of the *Encyclopedia of Shamanism*[7]*,* the gender of individuals allowed to become shamans in China vary from society to society, from tribe to tribe, and even from clan to clan. Therefore, with regards to the multiple genders recognized in some shamanic societies,

[7] *The Encyclopedia of Shamanism,* consisting of 12 volumes, will be published in Beijing, China by 商務印書館 (The Commercial Press). Volume 1 covers traditional shamanism and its arts while volume 2 focuses on modern art and shamanism.

the initial definition of *shaman* was misleading and, with regards to gender, the initial definition of *shaman* could not be validated as written.

Moreover, the phrase "his or her" privileged masculine identity over feminine identity by – as is conventional in current English language usage – consistently putting *his* before *her.* This pattern is also seen in the conventional pairing "Mr. and Mrs.," where the masculine again consistently precedes the feminine.

While these language patterns are, relatively speaking, more equal than using the gender specific pronouns of *he, him,* and *his* to refer to both genders, there is still an inequality present in the sequence. Even more relevant to this study and the study of shamanism in general is the inaccuracy of referring to shamans via two polarized, gender specific pronouns, *her* and *his* when some American Indian tribes recognize a combined, or two spirit, gender.

I recommended that the definition of *shaman* be changed to reflect multiple genders without privileging any specific gender. The definition may seem more awkward and less elegantly written – however, the definition will be more accurate and, in research, accuracy is more important than elegance.

Operationalized Definition

In consideration of the previously mentioned factors, the study's operationalized definition is: A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention, which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members.

Rather than describing a specific individual, the operationalized definition of *shaman* presents an ideal type constructed through "the synthesis of many diffuse, discrete, concrete individual phenomena" (M. Weber, 1949, p. 90). Ideal types are constructed for purposes of "theoretical differentiation" (M. Weber, 1968, p. 20) and also give rise to "terminology, classification, and hypotheses" (p. 54).

Shaman can be seen as a classical category in that there is a clearly bounded set defined by necessary properties possessed by all members of the set. *Shaman* can include practitioners located anywhere on the planet, in any culture, amidst any ethnic group, at any point in time. The definition might be expressed as a formula:

$$A + B + C + D + E + F + G = shaman$$

Using the definien, "the group of words or concepts used in the definition" (Lakoff, 1987, p. 7), the formula may be expressed as:

social designation
spiritual practitioner
obtains information
in ways not available to the shaman's community
\+ through voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention
uses that information
for the benefit of the community and its members
shaman

Thus, according to the classical theory of categories, if an individual displays all necessary defining properties of *shaman*, then that individual is a shaman. As a classical definition of an ideal type, *shaman* facilitates comparisons of contemporary artists with shamans through classification processes.

To discover if artists do indeed qualify as shamans, the operationalized definition of *shaman* established the conditions to be met for the correct application of the term

shaman, while also establishing which shamanic phenomena must be present to identify an artist-shaman. The next step is to validate the operationalized definition.

Validation. One method of evaluating a definition's validity is to consider alternate arguments by competent authorities in the same domain. However, as noted earlier, competent authorities do not agree on the definition of *shaman.* In the *Anthropology of Religion,* Townsend (1997) defined *shaman* by these acts: entry into altered states of consciousness, communication with spirits, control of spirits, spirit possession, and a kind of astral projection (where a shaman's soul leaves the body and journeys into the realm of the spirits).

Walsh (1989), however, defined shamanism as "a family of traditions" with practitioners that "focus on voluntarily entering altered states of consciousness in which they experience themselves, or their spirit(s), as traveling to other realms at will and interacting with other entities in order to serve their community" (p. 5).

These definitions show how previous definitions often relied on specific kinds of actions, experiences, or goals. Not all shamans perform all of the actions mentioned by Townsend or Walsh. Not all shamans report being possessed by spirits or traveling to other realms. Therefore, these definitions cannot construct a classical category.

In contrast, the operationalized definition uses constructs that are abstractions. Table 2 shows how some defining constructs and selected examples from previous researchers are subsumed under the abstract constructs in the operationalized definition.

Table 2

Comparisons of Constructs in Different Definitions of Shaman

Krippner (2011)	**Eliade** (1964/1951)	**Harner** (1968/1986)		**Heinze** (1997)	**Townsend** (1997)	Whitely (2009)
Social designation	Described shamans recognized by community.	Described shamans recognized by community. However, community designation not required.		Described shamans recognized by community.		Described shamans recognized by community.
Spiritual	Mystical soul flight to heaven, meet god.	Meet personal animal spirit.	Communicates with spirits.	Implied via references to "higher powers" and spiritual needs.	Communicates with spirits.	
Practitioner	Healing rituals. Offerings to gods.	Practices various shamanistic technologies.	Practices traditions.	Performs community service.	Spirit control.	Created cave paintings and rock art.
Obtains information in ways not available to community.	Shamanic illness. Climbing world tree. Shape shifting.	Shamanic illness. Journey to upper or lower worlds.	Travels to other realms.	Creates connection to higher powers.	Astral projection. Spirit possession.	Genius, madness, insanity – all involuntary.

Voluntary regulation of attention	Ecstasy. Use of masks and costumes. Trance.	Voluntary journeys, divination, entheogens, drumming.	Voluntary altered states of consciousness.	Mediation through different states of consciousness.		
His or her	Primarily male, gender specific pronouns and most examples. Androcentric.			Male and female.		Primarily male as implied through gender specific pronouns and examples.
Used to benefit community and its members.	Soul retrieval, guide dead, healing.	Maybe, but generally benefits practitioner through self-knowledge. Primarily aimed towards individual practitioner as seen in neoshamanism.	Serve community.	Respond to psychological, social, spiritual needs. Provides community service. Information is communicated via understood form.		Whitley's personal, aesthetic and ecstatic experience of viewing prehistoric art.
Constructs not included in operationalized definition.		Neoshamanism does not require community recognition, shaman can be self-elected.				Mental illness, which is not voluntary. Does not accurately reflect current research understanding of associations between creativity, mental health, and mental illness.

At the bottom of Table 2, defining constructs that are not encompassed by the operationalized definition, such as involuntary madness (cf. Whitley, 2009) or self-election (cf. Harner, 1968/1986), are either a misapplication of cross-disciplinary data, over-generalize data in metanarratives, or do not apply to traditional shamanism.

In Chapters 5 through 9, I demonstrate how the operationalized definition of *shaman* avoids misapplied metanarratives by operationalizing constructs partly through examples from specific shamanic practices. Next, however, I demonstrate the validity of this study's operationalized definition of *shaman* through argument by example and appeal to authority, both forms of informal logic (Groarke, 2007; McInerny, 2005; Weston, 2009).

Expert opinion. Arguments may be advanced through appeals to authority (Walton, 1997). An authority is an expert in a specific field with sufficient qualifications as to make the expert's assertions reliable. As no authority is omniscient (Walton), the expert's opinion must be subjected to several means of evaluation including assessing command of a domain of knowledge upon which probable inferences are made.

Traditional shamans recognized Krippner's expertise on shamanism. For example, in 1992, Krippner spoke about shamanism at a conference in Brazil:

> Paulo Xavante, a shaman from the Xavante tribe, began the day with an outdoor ritual. Much to my surprise, he showed up for my lecture that afternoon. After I had described the link between shamanic practices and environmental protection, I paused for questions and comments. Paulo was the first to raise his hand. Somewhat in apprehension, I called upon him, and (in excellent Portuguese) he said, "I hope that all of you have been listening to the doctor. What he just told you about shamans is absolutely accurate." (Krippner, 2009a, para. 6)

Leslie Gray (n.d.), a university instructor and Native American shaman who integrates traditional healing methods into her work as a psychologist, established The Woodfish Institute to provide "education and services to the general public for the

purpose of bridging core indigenous ways of knowing and transindigenous healing methodologies." In 2007, The Woodfish Institute and the Association for Transpersonal Psychology gave Jones and Krippner an award "for co-creating a transpersonal social action project that is mutually transforming" (Greenleaf, 2007, p. 23).

Krippner (2009a) recounted how he has "met with several dozen shamans from the world's six inhabited continents, many of them at conferences that focused on cross-cultural healing practices or on environmental activism." Krippner experienced shamanism firsthand through his close friendship with the intertribal medicine man Rolling Thunder (S. M. S. Jones & Krippner, 2012). S. Krippner (personal communication, March 13, 2010) also participated in shamanic rituals with Guarani Indians of Brazil and observed shamanic healing practices in Indonesia, Mexico, Peru, South Korea, and Russia.

Krippner is respected as an internationally renowned expert on shamanism as well as the related topics of parapsychology, consciousness, and dreams, with numerous publications on these topics (Krippner, 1962-1963, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2000c, 2002a, 2002b, 2002c, 2004a, 2004b, 2005a, 2005b, 2007, 2009a, 2009b, 2009c; Krippner & Kremer, 2010; Krippner & Sulla, 2000). Krippner received awards from the Parapsychological Association, the American Psychological Association, the International Association for the Study of Dreams, and many other organizations for his groundbreaking research.

The strength of the operationalized definition of *shaman* rests upon Krippner's comprehensive, even encyclopedic, knowledge of shamanism. Expert status alone, however, does not guarantee the validity of a definition. As Walton (1997) noted, appeals

to authority can be considered fallacious if the expert is revered uncritically. Krippner's lack of extended field research within one shamanic community could be considered a weak point in the argument for his expertise on shamans.

Bernard (2006) noted that field research

> Traditionally takes a year or more because it takes that long to get a feel for the full round of people's lives. It can take that long just to settle in, learn a new language, gain rapport, and be in a position to ask good questions and get good answers. (p. 349)

If the researcher is already familiar with the culture and speaks the language, Bernard believed that participant observation could be conducted in less than a year. Another ethnographer, van Maanen (1988), recognized the validity of "comparatively short visits to the field" to study "highly selected aspects of the culture studied," and then making "tightly focused interpretations of definitionally-specific topics" (p. 53). This latter method describes Krippner's studies of shamans *in situ.*

Ruth-Inge Heinze (1919-2007), an anthropologist who devoted many years to studying shamans in Asia, informed Krippner that at least 30 days was required to gain sufficient knowledge of a culture to discuss it with outsiders (S. Krippner, personal communication, March 13, 2010). Krippner accumulated over 30 days with African-Brazilian religious groups before he began speaking and writing about Umbanda, Candomblé, and similar African-Brazilian sects (S. Krippner, personal communication, March 13, 2010).

Does Krippner qualify as an expert on shamanism based on field research? Individual anthropologists and ethnographers might answer this question differently based on different sets of qualifications. I am not sufficiently knowledgeable about

fieldwork to offer a personal opinion. I can, however, provide a second means of validating the operationalized definition.

Argument by example. Through argument by example, the operationalized definition of *shaman* can be compared with descriptions of shamans from anthropologists who *did* conduct prolonged research in the field. In addition, I apply information gleaned from numerous studies and reports dated from the 16th century, when European expeditions first explored Siberia, to the present.

I also address how the operationalized definition resolves the dichotomized argument of culture specific definitions of shaman versus globally generalized definitions of shaman.

Definition delimitations. However, the definition of *shaman* operationalized herein is delimited by construction as a classical category with absolute boundaries.

The definition is also idealized. Particular shamanic cultures bifurcate practitioners into white shamans and black shamans. From a cross-cultural, globally generalized perspective of shamanism, Winkelman (2002) wrote "Shamans are also believed capable of malevolent magical acts, attacking others with spirits, sorcery, and stealing their soul" (p. 1875). Amidst the Siberian Buryat, white shamans performed practices intended to benefit others and black shamans performed practices intended to harm others, aided by evil or dark spirits (Mikhailovskii, 1895).

This distinction does not generalize across cultures, however. In the Yakut, black shamans performed at night, were entrusted with the most urgent situations and the sickest clients. Originally, Yakut black shamans were probably all female and, if male, took on characteristics of women (Czaplicka, 1922).

In Tuva, early black shamans were believed to form relationships with spirits in the lower world. Later, some Tuvinian communities believed black shamans were predominantly evil; however, other communities believed the greatest shamans could shamanize to white, pure spirits *and* black, evil spirits (Balzer, 1997).

Black-and-white shamans, capable of practices intended to benefit *and* practices intended to harm, are included by this study's operationalized definition of *shaman* because they do practice, at times, with intent to benefit. However, their occasional intent to harm is not included in the comparisons because this intent is outside the classically bounded definition *shaman* operationalized herein. Other less central properties of shamans were also excluded from this study.

Key Constructs and Construct Groups

The key constructs in the operationalized definition of shaman, which are the necessary constructs that will be used for comparisons with properties of contemporary artists, are: social designation, practitioner, obtaining information, unavailable ways, voluntary regulation, attention, use, benefit, community, and member.

For the sake of comparison, the definition of *shaman* is separated into groups of related constructs consisting of adjective plus noun pairs (s*ocial designation* and *spiritual practice*) or individual predicate phrases combining verb, related adverb if any, preposition, adjective if any, and object noun (*obtain information in unavailable ways*, *voluntary regulation of attention*, and *used for benefit of the community and its members*).

All of these constructs must be fulfilled for someone to qualify as a classically defined *shaman*, as operationalized herein. But, the concrete ways in which individual shamans or artists fulfill these abstract constructs can vary widely.

Shamanic

Shamanic is an adjective that denotes a person, community, process, action, or object related to shamanism. *Shamanic* can indicate an individual or group of individuals that fulfill all defining constructs of *shaman. Shamanic* may refer to a community that designates shamans, participates in rituals or other actions with shamans, and holds cosmological beliefs in common with their shaman.

If an individual fulfills all necessary constructs defining *shaman* and *artist*, then that individual was considered a *shamanic artist*. If a contemporary artist was a member of a traditional shamanic society and if that artist was also a socially designated shaman, then that artist was considered a *traditional shamanic artist.*

Shamanistic and Shamanlike

Shamanistic is an adjective employed herein to indicate a person, process, or product that is similar to, but different from, *shaman.* In general, *shamanistic* implies that the defining constructs of *shaman* are partly fulfilled. One or more constructs may be missing. Alternatively, the constructs may be fulfilled erratically, perhaps without intent to benefit community, sometimes to limited degrees, or possibly for a limited period of time.

Similarly, *shamanlike* refers to practices that "bear some relation to shamanic techniques and yet depart from what may properly be called shamanism" (Rock, Abbott, Childargushi, & Kiehne, 2008, p. 80).

Rock and Storm (2011) provided a differentiating example:

> Ingesting psilocybin in order to ascend to the 'upper world' and consult one's power animal with the aim of serving one's social group may be considered a shamanic technique, whereas recreationally using psilocybin to enter an ostensible ASC [altered state of consciousness] and explore the 'upper world' is merely shamanic-like. (p. 20)

In the latter example, shamanic-like, a construct necessary to the definition of *shaman* is absent. The use of a hallucinogen is not shamanic partly because there is no intent to benefit a community or its individual members. In addition, spiritual intent or spiritual practice is lacking. Note how both categories described by Rock and Storm (2011) lack social designation. Therefore, the term *shamanic-like* is not used to designate sets of artists or their creative processes and products in this study.

Shamanic Community

The definition of *shaman,* operationalized herein, recognizes the essential role of the shamanic community. Communities socially designate their shamans and receive benefits from shamanic practices.

Heinze (1997) defined *shaman* by performance of community service in response to psychological, social, or spiritual needs, through mediation between different states of consciousness, and the creation of connection to "higher powers" which is communicated via understood form.

Within this definition, the important role of shamanic community is emphasized. The shaman cannot perform community service without a community. Therefore, as I argued in a consideration of art audiences as shamanic communities (Benyshek, in press-a), we must also consider shamanic communities to broaden our understanding of artists as shamans.

The definition of *shaman* constructed by Heinze (1997) also implied a partial definition of shamanic community. A shamanic community has psychological, social, or spiritual needs. The members share an understood form of communication and provide a role for the shaman. They depend on the shaman's skills in mediating between different states of consciousness. The community requires assistance with accessing "higher powers." While shamanic communities are more complex than described herein, the definition delimits the number of variables to be considered.

Spiritual

Spiritual is a quality that may involve:

- A numinous sense of divinity, supernatural being, deity, spirits, universal being;
- That which is immaterial, not corporeal, yet may be experienced through something that is physical, as well as within one's self, outside of one's self, or encompassing all;
- An intellectual aspect of spirit; mystical experience or peak experience;
- An intuitive perception of oneness with the universe, ecstatic union, contact with the infinite, identity of personal self joined with cosmic self, divinity, or "pure consciousness";
- An experience of nonduality;
- An experience wherein the common source and material of all things is recognized or sensed, including original creation; or,
- A higher moral sensibility (Spiritual, 2011a, 2011b).

Spiritual is further operationalized at the beginning of Chapter 6, "Spiritual Practitioner."

Soul

There is no uniform, cross-disciplinary, or cross-cultural understanding of what a soul is. Van de Kemp (2000) wrote: "The idea of soul is among the most elusive, complicated concepts in western intellectual history…." (p. 334). Across cultures, folk taxonomies categorized souls differently. Each culture, of course, uses words from its own language for what, in English, is translated into "soul" – and translation often erases nuance of meaning present in specific cultural contexts.

While acknowledging the inevitably flawed and fragmentary meanings inherent in translation, it is important to recognize that research literature repeatedly described processes used by shamans to retrieve souls. Thus, the word *soul* might have some common, general "folk" definition with a consistent core and outlying deviations.

Many shamanic societies believe in multiple souls (Sidky, 2008). According to Sumegi (2008), the Tibetans believe in protective spirits who inhabit the body, serve different roles, and are considered "internal aspects of a person's life force or soul" (p. 16). Complex and interrelated, these souls are "perceived as substantial "beings" that possess agency to act in different ways and fulfill different functions" (p. 16).

In ancient Greece, the concept of soul evolved continually (Lorenz, 2009). Soul was multipartite and responsible for all vital, animating functions, moral judgment, change, reasoning, desire, emotions, and interpretation of sense impressions. Over centuries, contradictions in definitions arose between different schools of philosophy.

Soul was seen as finely corporeal or independently incorporeal, mortal or immortal, rational and nonrational (Lorenz).

For the purposes of this study, the concept *soul* refers to an aspect of an entity, which is experienced as an essence of identity and also as a spiritual potential, metaphorically dwelling within the self and the body and also existing outside the physical body, potentially connecting to and communicating with a greater spiritual entity, higher power, or what Hegel (1807/2011) called universal mind.

For Van de Kemp (2000), an understanding of *soul* "dictates an anthropology that regards persons as embodied souls or ensouled bodies, and a psychology defined as the logos or speech of the *psuchē*" (pp. 334-335). In this sense, perhaps like the art spirit believed to enliven artworks so that meaningful communication with art audience members is possible (see Henri, 1923; Kandinsky, 1916/1994; Kant, 1790/1928), *soul* might also be an enlivening and meaning-making element within research.

Definitions: Chapter Summary

Within this chapter, I developed the operationalized definitions of *art, artist, art audience, community, contemporary, creativity, psi, shaman, shamanic community, shamanic, shamanistic, shamanlike, spiritual,* and *soul.*

For the purposes of this study and to simplify the comparison process, the overarching, operationalized definition of *art* is synonymous with the fine arts, including visual arts, performing arts, literature, and architecture. However, exceptions to this definition may be included as relevant to the constructs defining *shaman* during the comparative process, potentially including crafts, folk arts, and certain kinds of material culture.

Within the definition of *art,* I described hierarchies of art that arose from social class values and a privileging of fine arts over utilitarian crafts, folk arts, and material culture. Although a concept of aesthetics, or beauty, is found globally, most traditional shamanic cultures do not have a concept synonymous with fine art. Some members of traditional societies reject *art* as an appropriate category for their petroglyphs and pictographs. In contrast, other members of traditional societies as well as some art historians, accepted *art* as an appropriate term for aesthetically rendered, expressive forms of spiritual communication created for utilitarian purposes. In addition, contemporary Western artists continually questioned and moved boundaries defining *art*.

As a result of these questions, rejections, expansions, and challenges, *art* is categorized by cognitive linguistics as a fuzzy set wherein members have a family resemblance, that is, all members have some properties of the set but not all members have all properties of the set. In addition, there are more or less representative members in the fuzzy set *art* and there can be gradated degrees of membership.

Quite simply, an artist is an individual who creates art.

Art audience refers to a group of individuals who experience a work of art or works of art by a certain creator or group of creators, whether through direct experience of an original work or via reproduction. *Art audiences* refer to more than one group of individuals who experience art.

Community is operationalized as a group of individuals, the members of the community, who hold common interests and are interconnected partly through a sense of belonging, a shared identity, and a process of exchange.

The operationalization of *contemporary* delimits data collection. Herein, contemporary artists are those individuals working after 1775 C.E., the year the steam engine was invented. Many issues addressed by contemporary artists arose as a direct result of the industrial revolution sparked by the invention of the steam engine.

Creativity is defined as a "dynamic process in which "creators think, feel, experience, motivate and direct themselves, and behave related to the generation of original and meaningful creative outcomes" (Richards, 1999b). As a set, *creativity* contains subsets conceptualized as everyday creativity and high C, or eminent, creativity. In turn, everyday creativity embraces the subsets of low C, middle C, and pro-c kinds of creativity.

Psi refers to "reported interactions between organisms and their environment (including other organisms) that appear to transcend the physical and biological demarcations of Western science," including the categories of "remote perception," "remote influence," and "survival of bodily death" (Krippner & Friedman, 2010a, p. 4).

Many problems attended past attempts to define *shaman.* There are arguments that *shaman* should be restricted to the Siberian tribes where the word originated, that *shaman* will lose meaning from global generalization, and that *shaman* does not adequately indicate the variety of practitioners in different cultures. Previous metanarratives about "The Shaman" are also problematic because specific beliefs and certain practices were incorrectly generalized. Moreover, some members of traditional cultures do not view neoshamanism as an authentic form.

Some scholars carefully constructed globally generalized definitions of *shaman*. Yet, properties of these definitions differ. Some properties of shamanism are excluded,

other properties do not generalize, and some constructs are difficult to operationalize. A consideration of the etymology of *shaman* did not offer assistance toward achieving a validated operationalization of the concept.

I then presented a narrative describing the evolution of this study's operationalized definition of *shaman.* With psychologist Stanley Krippner, I engaged in a discussion about constructing an operational definition of *shaman.* After several modifications, and a probing question by psychologist Art Bohart, Krippner presented a definition that could be operationalized. However, the inclusion of gender specific pronouns, "her" and "his," created a problem in that some shamanic societies recognize more than two genders. Further, the typical order pattern of gendered pronouns, *his* before *her*, can indicate a subtle presence of hierarchies in value.

In consideration of the foregoing, the final operationalized definition of *shaman* became:

> A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention, which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members.

This definition established a classical category where the all constructs are necessary and all constructs must be present to identify someone as a shaman.

A procedure for validating the operationalized definition was initiated. I demonstrated how previous definitions are encompassed by the operationalized definition's abstract constructs. The validation methods of expert opinion and argument by example were applied.

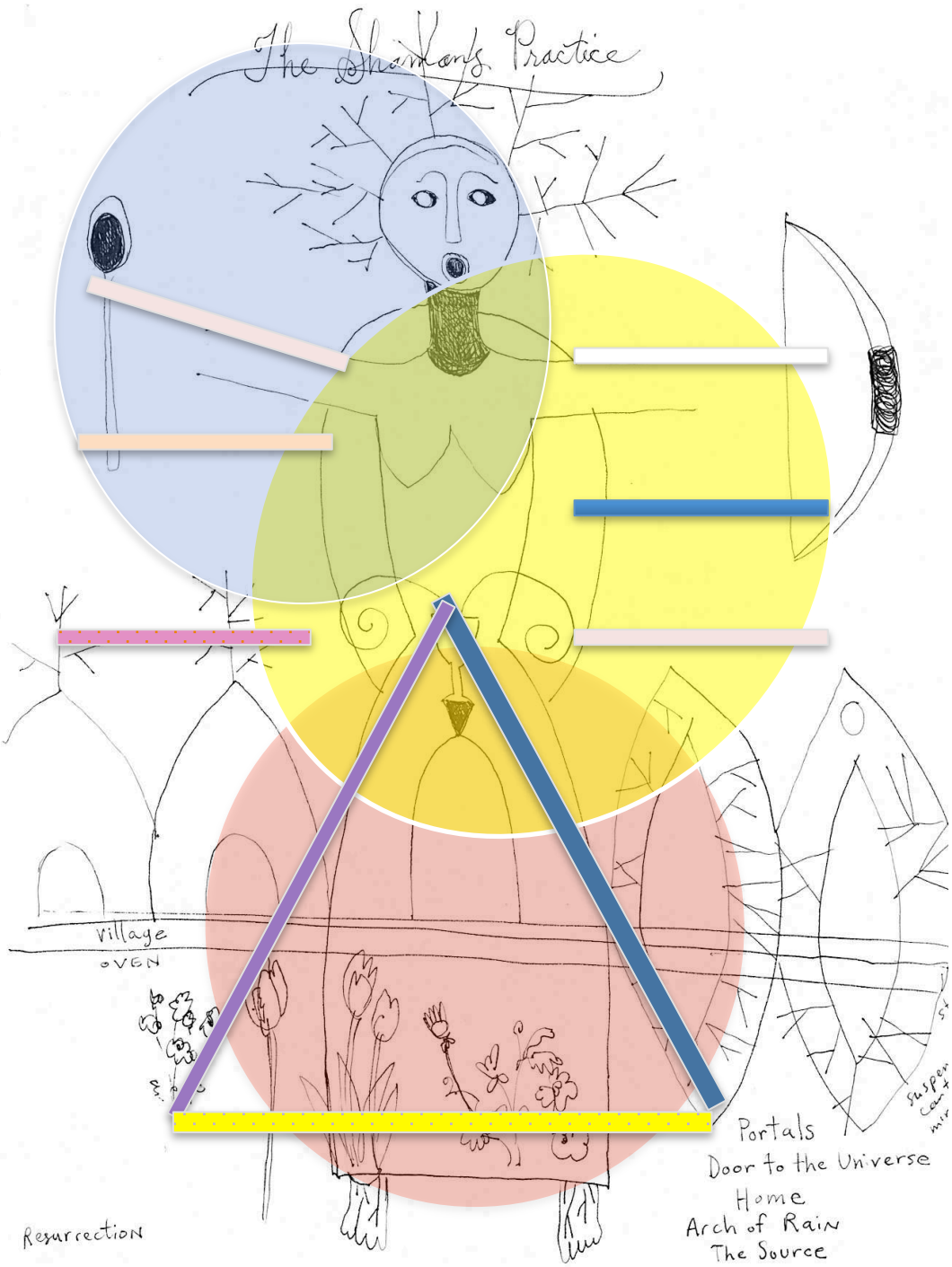
A *shamanic artist* is an individual who qualifies as an artist and as a shaman, fulfilling all constructs of the operationalized definition of *shaman.*

I operationalized *shamanistic* and *shamanlike* to provide means of describing artists who fulfill some, but not all, constructs defining *shaman*. Subsets of *shamanistic* or *shamanlike* artists have familial relationships with *shamanic artists.*

Spiritual is a numinous, sometimes mystical quality that may involve a supernatural being or infinite quality such as pure consciousness, yet, paradoxically, may be experienced through physical entities or within one's self, through intuition, mystical experience or peak experience.

Soul was operationalized as a spiritual aspect of an individual or society that is sometimes conceptualized as metaphorically dwelling, perhaps temporarily, inside the self and the physical body, while also existing as part of or in communication with a great spiritual entity.

In the subsequent chapters, the operationalized definition of *shaman* is divided into construct groups; each construct group is operationalized, validated with examples from different traditional shamanic cultures, and then compared to properties of contemporary artists.


The Shaman's Practice
village
OVEN
Resurrection
Portals
Door to the Universe
Home
Arch of Rain
The Source

Chapter 5: Social Designation

To begin exploring if properties of contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman,* the first construct group to be operationalized and compared is *social designation.* When asked to define *shaman* during an interview, Krippner began:

> First of all, shamans are socially sanctioned by their community. In other words, it is the community that decides who deserves the label of shaman; of course, these labels are different in every culture. The community also decides who does not deserve the label of a shaman. In this way, a community protects itself from charlatans, imposters, and the mentally ill--all of which might claim to have healing powers. (Raynes, 2008)

While all shamanic societies have ways to identify shamans, the method or combination of methods vary from culture to culture. These methods include prerequisites for becoming a shaman, signs of calling to be a shaman, accepting the call, apprenticeship, training, initiation, and bestowal of title.

As reported in archival documents, culture-specific examples of social designation in shamanic communities are drawn from Tungus, South Korean, Hmong, Balinese, Hungary, Navajo, Mohave, Ojibwe, Tlingit, Haida, Chukchee, Eskimo, and Zulu communities.

Shamans mentioned by name include: Aua, Mandaza Augustine Kandemwa, Changvang Her, Pao Saykao, Rolling Thunder, and Lasso Stasso. Kim Kum Hwa, Norval Morrisseau, and Jóska Soós represent artists who were explicitly acknowledged as shamans by their traditional shamanic communities.

Creative properties of different contemporary artists are compared to the abstract construct *social designation* as well as the cultural-specific, concrete examples of acts that indicate *social designation.* The following artists were used as examples in

comparisons: poets Emily Dickinson, William Blake, George Seferis, Lord Byron, May Sarton, and Allen Ginsberg; visual/performance artists Joseph Beuys and Lauren Raine; painters Clifford Stills, Georgia O'Keefe, Arthur Dove, Charles Burchfield, Thomas Cole, Henri Matisse, Hilma af Klint, Elizabeth Layton, Issa Ibrahim, Wassily Kandinsky, and Robert Henri; rock music vocalist and song writer, Jim Morrison; installation and earthworks artist, James Turrell; and sculptor Inez Marshall.

Data from the following fields contributed to comparisons: anthropology, psychology, creativity studies, neuroscience, psychiatry, genetics, parapsychology, biography, mythology, philosophy, ancient history, art reviews, and the histories of art, music, and literature.

Researchers in different fields relied on different methods for identifying, collecting, and analyzing data regarding shamans and also artists. In addition, shamanic communities used language-specific concepts that are different from concepts used by researchers. As a result, direct construct to construct comparisons between shamans and subsets of artists often cannot be made.

Instead, I identify a "common denominator" in the shaman or artist person, through considerations of shamanic and artistic processes, products resulting from the work of shamans and artists, and types of environmental press that influence shamans and artists. I explain what the similarities are, why comparisons can be made, and what comparisons reveal. Differences are also identified and discussed.

As relevant to the topic, I have added autobiographical details or stories that illustrate the topic under discussion.

Operationalization of *Social Designation*

Social (2010) is a concept describing "interactions of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society" and a tendency "to form cooperative and interdependent relationships with others of one's kind." *Designation* (2010) is defined as "the act of indicating or identifying," an "appointment to or selection for an office, post, or service," or the bestowal of "a distinguishing name, sign, or title." Thus, with regards to shamans, *social designation* is an act where the community functions cooperatively to indicate, identify, appoint, or select a shaman. A name or title may be given while certain signs might also designate a shaman. These acts distinguish a shaman from other community members.

Shamanic communities rely upon traditional methods for identifying future shamans (Benedict, 1938/1958; Krippner, 1991; Shirokogoroff, 1935/2004). These methods of identification include family transmission (Gallagher & Ashcraft, 2006), recognizing different forms of the call to shamanism (Benedict, 1938/1958; Bogoras, 1904/2004; Dixon, 1908/2004; van Gennep, 1903/2004), certain prerequisites that must be met prior to becoming a shaman, traditions that structure apprenticeship (Biet, 1664/2004; Krippner, 1991; Luna, 1984a; Luna, 1984/2004; Shirokogoroff, 1935/2004; van Gennep, 1903/2004), initiation rituals (Dixon, 1908/2004; Jonaitis, 1986; Laguna, 1972), and bestowal of a title (Biet, 1664/2004; Im Thurn, 1883/2004; Métraux, 1949/2004; Sutlive, 1973; Thévet, 1557/2004). Any combination of these methods might occur (P. Vitebsky, 2001) and these methods differ, to a greater or lesser extent, from society to society. Any one of these methods will be sufficient for indicating the social designation of a shaman.

Inheritance and Familial Influences

Most shamanic communities believe that shamanic abilities are heritable whether passed from parents or grandparents to offspring (Gallagher & Ashcraft, 2006), through matrilineal or patrilineal descent (Dixon, 1908/2004), or skipping generations in nonlinear inheritance. Similarly, artistic ability is also believed by many to be inherited. Norval Morrisseau, who is an eminent artist as well as a shaman recognized by the Ojibwe tribe, commented, "Among the Indians, as among other nations, some people are born artists, but most are not" (Redbird, 2009). As shown in Figure 3, many individuals and cultures believe shamanic and artistic talents are inherited.

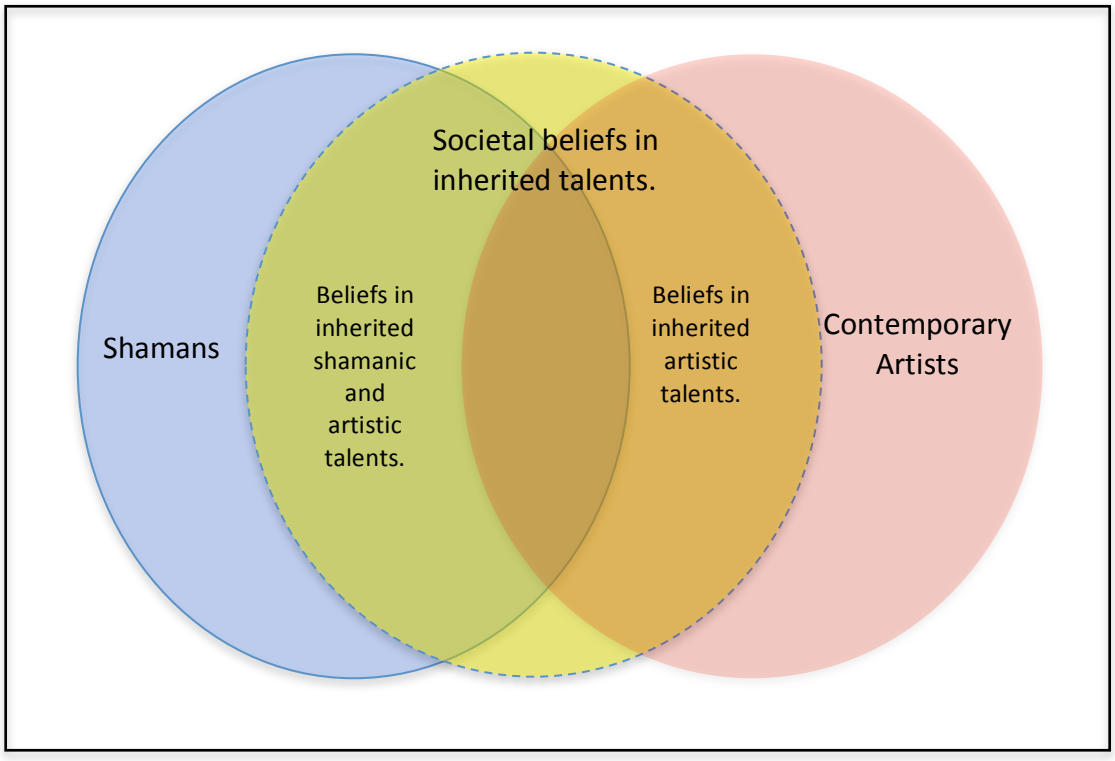


Figure 3. Many societies believe that talents are inherited, including shamanic and artistic talents.

Although these beliefs are common, the presence of strong beliefs does not necessarily indicate that the belief is true. To gain insight into whether or not there is a similarity in the inheritance of shamanic and artistic talents requires looking at specific, more narrowly drawn categories.

The heritability of shamanism and artistry can be examined through family clusters of vocations, family patterns of transmission, and genetic evidence. Eysenck (1995) observed that a generation-to-generation sequence of a specific talent or kind of genius "is ambiguous; the sequence could be due either to genetic or environmental factors, so that nothing can be deduced from it" (p. 14). Nonetheless, this study considered the influence of familial environments inasmuch as "nurture" might be perceived as the result of one aspect of "nature" (i.e., inheritance). Thus, the influence of family environments on future shamans could contribute to beliefs in inherited talents.

Patterns

Some shamanic communities "pass down" shamanism through generations along an established pattern. For example, in the Tlingit of southeastern Alaska, a deceased shaman's nephew often inherits shamanic power (Jonaitis, 1986). Some shamanic communities believe that any descendent of a shaman may inherit shamanic traits. For the Maidu of northern California, all children of a shaman eventually become shamans; but, not until after the shaman-parent has died (Dixon, 1907). Vitebsky (1995) described how "The Mongol shaman had an hereditary right or quality called *udkha* which was traced back to the celestial origin of his line" (p. 56) which might be from the sky god or an ancestor struck by lightening.

In a few shamanic societies, established patterns of inheritance include castes. The Sub-Saharan Mande or Bamana tribe confine shamanic powers and tasks to a caste of blacksmiths comprised of an extended family (McNaughton, 1988). These various patterns of inheritance are simplified and represented in Figure 4.

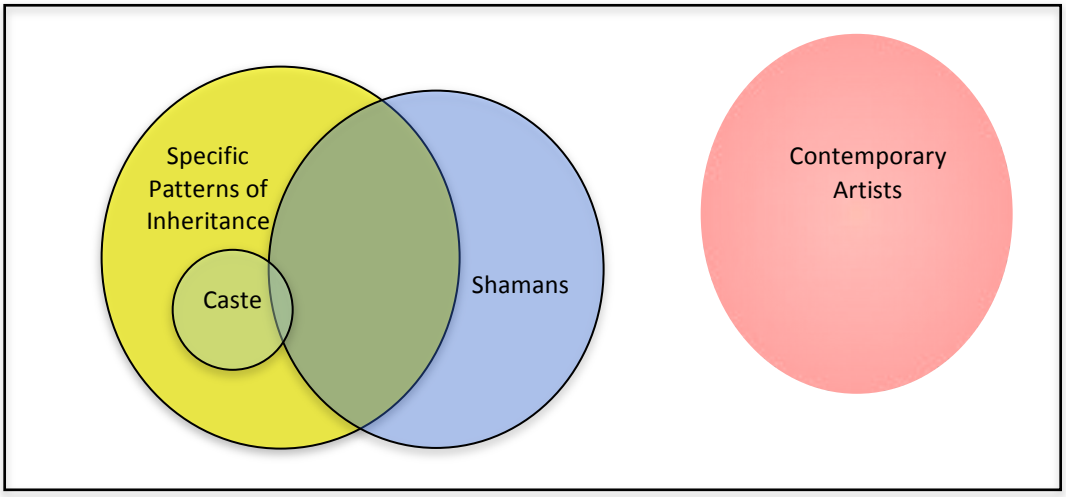


Figure 4. Shamanic societies often believe that shamanism is inherited through specific patterns or limited to a certain caste. These believes are not applied to contemporary artists.

Specific patterns of inheritance and caste restriction were not found in contemporary artists.

Clusters

The presence of multiple shamans within one extended family indicates the presence of a family cluster of shamanism; that is, many shamans are found within a certain family and fewer shamans come from other families within the same community.

Family clusters of numerous vocations as well as the presence of moderate and eminent achievement, were long recognized in the West (see Ellis, 1904; Galton, 1870; Lombroso, 1891). There is evidence of familial clusters of artistic talents for music

(Mjoen, 1925) and drawing (Haecker & Ziehen, 1931). Vocational family clusters indicate the possibility of trait inheritance in both shamans and artists.

However, vocational family clusters do not establish a direct link between artists and shamans inasmuch as many kinds of vocational clusters are found in families (see Ellis, 1904; Galton, 1870; Lombroso, 1891). In the United States, the Kennedy family's multigenerational involvement in politics is an example of a vocational cluster within a family.

As seen in Figure 5, the category of vocational family clusters is too broad and contains too many vocations to identify similarities between shamans and artists.

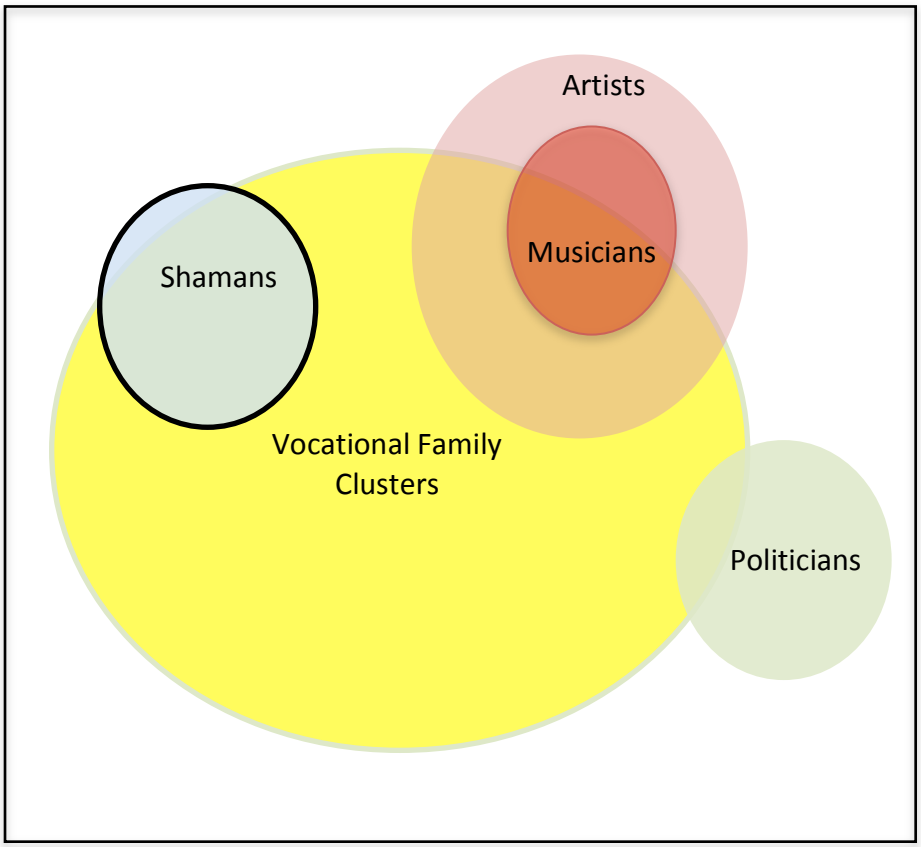


Figure 5. Vocational family clusters are found in many professions, including shamans, artists, musicians, and politicians.

In future research, more narrowly drawn categories as well as additional research questions could help determine if contemporary artists inherit shamanic properties. Are traits associated with shamanism found in higher concentrations within families of artists? Are these traits heritable?

Genetics

In genetics, *heritability* is the "proportion of variance in a trait that can be attributed to genetic factors" (Martindale, 1999c, p. 767). To my knowledge, there is no genetic research on the heritability of shamanism or shamanic traits. Therefore, genetic studies of shamans cannot be directly compared with genetic studies of artists. There are, however, genetic studies on creativity that might apply to shamans inasmuch as shamans are considered creative individuals (Balzer, 2004; Kharitonova, 2004; Rasmussen, 2004; Richards, 2000-2001; B. Tedlock, 2004b; van Deusen, 2004).

To what extent is creativity heritable? Some creative traits, such as certain kinds of psychopathology, certain talents, and aspects of personality, are heritable. Some of these traits are considered next.

Inheritable psychopathology. Several early researchers (e.g., Bogoras 1904/2004; Czaplicka, 1914/2004a) diagnosed shamans with psychopathology. In the 1960s, two researchers concluded that shamans qualified for psychopathological diagnoses. Devereaux[8] (1956/2004, 1961, 1969) wrote of shamans as deranged, neurotic, and psychotic. During the same time period as Devereaux's studies, Silverman (1967) found shamanism similar to schizophrenia due to "grossly non-reality-oriented ideation, abnormal perceptual experiences, profound emotional upheavals, and bizarre

[8] A critique of Devereaux's schizophrenia diagnosis was offered in Chapter 2, within the broader consideration of how shamans were mistakenly psychopathologized in the past.

mannerisms" (p. 22), while Lommel (1966) believed an occasional psychotic intrusion was a necessary stage in the shaman's artistic practice.

In contrast, one study assessed Apache shamans as having superior mental health (Boyer et al., 1964). More recent studies did not find marked psychopathology, including schizophrenia, in shamans. A study of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal found "no evidence that shamanism is an expression of psychopathology" (van Ommeren et al., 2004, p. 313). Additional studies and reviews of literature (Fabrega & Silver, 1973; Noll, 1983; Walsh, 2001) also found mental health to be the norm with shamans, even when behaviors and experiences interpreted as symptoms of psychosis continued after initiation (Stephen & Suryani, 2000).

While more rigorous studies did not find psychopathology in practicing shamans, psychopathology is associated with creativity, including psychoticism (Eysenck, 1995), bipolar disorders (Andreasen, 1987; Hershman & Lieb, 1998; Richards, Kinney, Lunde, Benet, & Merzel, 1997), schizophrenia, and schizotypy (Biello, 2005; Carson, 2011; Kinney et al., 2000-2001; Miller & Tal, 2007; Richards, 2000-2001; Schuldberg & Sass, 1999; Stanford University Medical Center, 2002). These mental illnesses are more prevalent in creative individuals or their families, especially in first-degree relatives, than in normal populations or people who are not creative. But, the relationship between psychopathology and creativity is not absolute or simple.

Milder, subclinical, partial expressions of a few symptoms, or specific aspects of bipolar disease or schizophrenia are associated with creativity (Richards, 2000-2001; Richards et al., 1997). While these milder or partial forms might not qualify shamans for

a diagnosis of psychopathology, perhaps milder or partial forms contribute to the creativity of shamans.

Schizotypal personality disorder is seen as a milder form of schizophrenia. Some schizotypal symptoms can be used to describe shamans and their beliefs, powers, and practices. “Schizotypal personality disorder symptoms” include being loners, “feeling that external events have personal meaning...belief in special powers, such as telepathy,” dressing “in peculiar ways,” believing “in unusual ideas, such as the powers of ESP or a sixth sense,” and believing “they can magically influence people’s thoughts, actions, and emotions” (Mayo Clinic, 2010).

As an example of an external event having personal meaning, the shaman Rolling Thunder believed that he summoned a thunderstorm and that this act demonstrated his shamanic powers (L. Dossey, personal communication, May 2008). Many shamanic societies believe in telepathy or other forms of psi such as extrasensory perception (ESP), with shamans being viewed as especially talented in alleged psi abilities. While not considered unusual within the context of shamanic communities, patient reports of psi powers could be seen as symptoms of mental illness by a Western psychiatrist.

In certain shamanic societies, shamans were distinguished from other members of their community by ways of dressing or styling their hair, which could be interpreted as an unusual form of dressing, another symptom of schizotypy. Amidst the Haida of Alaska, the hair of a shaman was never cut or combed (Beck, 1999); however, this practice was part of the community’s traditions and not caused by individual psychopathology.

Magical thinking might be see in how shamans perform rituals or other practices with the deliberate intent of influencing the thoughts, actions, beliefs, or emotions of their community's members; yet, again, magical thinking is often found in entire shamanic communities.

Many schizotypic symptoms do not qualify as psychopathology due to cultural norms. If beliefs, behaviors, and experiences are considered cultural norms by a society, and do not deviate from the society's cultural norm, then the "symptoms" no longer indicate individual psychopathology. Lewis-Fernández and Kleinman (1994) recognized that personality disorders are culture-dependent constructs that are partly defined by what is considered acceptable and what is considered deviant within a specific culture.

Shamans, with their preference for solitude, could be perceived as loners (a term with negative valence) or as introverts (a term with less negative valence). Moreover, someone who prefers solitude is not necessarily uncomfortable with close relationships. Bettelheim (1969/2001) found that the need for "shared group feelings" was counterproductive for adolescent creativity. After discussing the role of solitude in spiritual activities such as meditation and prayer, Storr (1988) mused that development, fulfilling personal potential, optimal brain functioning, "learning, thinking, innovation, and maintaining contact with one's own inner world are all facilitated by solitude" (p. 28).

Table 3 presents the diagnostic criteria of schizotypal personality disorder from the American Psychiatric Association's (2000) *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (4th edition, text revision; *DSM-IV-TR*). The table compares properties of shamans and contemporary artists with the list of symptoms.

Table 3

Schizotypal Symptoms in Shamans and Artists

Symptoms of Schizotypal Personality Disorder from *DSM-IV-TR* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000)	Examples or mild, subclinical expressions of symptoms.	Shamans	Contemporary Artists
(1) Ideas of reference (excluding delusions of reference)	Feel that external events have personal meaning.	Interpret external events through shamanic cosmological beliefs. For example, might interpret seeing an eagle as a divine presence. *Cultural norm*.	Not found in data considered.
(2) Odd beliefs or magical thinking that influences behavior and *is inconsistent with subcultural norms* [emphasis added] (e.g., superstitiousness, belief in clairvoyance, telepathy, or "sixth sense"; in children and adolescents, bizarre fantasies or preoccupations).	Belief in special powers such as telepathy.	Some shamans report experiences of clairvoyance, telepathy, precognition, or shamanic journeys, *consistent with cultural norms*.	Some artists, perhaps a small subset, believe they have psi abilities and report paranormal experiences, including clairvoyance, telepathy, remote viewing, and precognition. A few studies of psi abilities found artists to achieve higher scores. Such *beliefs may be consistent with norms of certain subcultures* within the set contemporary artists, such as groups with occult practices or strong religious beliefs.
	Magical thinking. Believe they can magically influence the thoughts, actions, and emotions of other people.	Yes, as *consistent with cultural norms.* There is empirical research showing the positive effects of distant prayer.	Can influence thoughts, actions, and emotions of art audiences through works of art; however, these outcomes are not attributed to magic.

		Use magic to attempt to influence people, weather, hunting, warfare, etc. *as consistent with cultural norms.*	
	Believe in unusual ideas, such as ESP or a sixth sense.	In shamanic cultures ESP and sixth sense would not be viewed negatively and, instead, are valued as *consistent with cultural norms.*	Yes, reported by small subset of artists. In a few studies, artists were found to have higher degrees of psi abilities compared with other populations.
(3) Unusual perceptual experiences, including bodily illusions.		Could include visions, hallucinations, seeing spirits, experiencing journeys to other realms, sensation of dismemberment during initiation. Such experiences would not be viewed as psychopathology within traditional shamanic communities and are *consistent with cultural norms.*	In subsets of artists who experience different kinds of perceptions due to hallucinogens or other forms of regulating attention, accessing alternate states of consciousness, or purported spirit communication. Could include peak and plateau experiences.
(4) Odd thinking and speech (e.g., vague, circumstantial, metaphorical, overelaborate, or stereotyped).		May use metaphors in communications, poetic speech. Also, some shamans use archaic words, or have exceptionally large vocabularies. Some communications, such as divinations, may be suggestive or vague, allowing for varying interpretations. Mande shaman-smiths use a secret language, *kilisi,* during rituals.	Some artists, especially poets such as Shakespeare or William Blake, and magic realists frequently employ metaphors. Odd speech might be considered typical of surrealistm Dada, and theatre of the absurd. Romanesque, Baroque, Romantic, Victorian, and some kinds of folk art use "over" elaborate (when compared to modernism or minimalism) designs. Elaborate visual compositions are also seen in the creations of some "outside" artists

		Again, *consistent with cultural norms.*	such as the Grotto of Father Dobberstein or the visual art of Adolph Wölfli, who was psychotic. Not found: vague, circumstantial, or stereotyped thinking or speech.
(5) Suspiciousness or paranoid ideation.		Not found.	Not found except in subset of outsider artists diagnosed with psychopathology.
(6) Inappropriate or constricted affect.		Not found.	Not found.
(7) Behavior or appearance that is odd, eccentric, or peculiar.	Peculiar behavior.	Examples found in data. For example, in stories of shamans shared by Leslie Gray, one shaman could only travel by turning to the right, never the left. Eccentric behavior is expected, even prescribed, by shamanic communities.	Can be nonconformists although this is generally expressed within a limited range of behaviors within artistic subcultures. Also found within self-actualizing individuals who have transcended conventions.
	Dress in peculiar ways. (Note: "peculiar" has negative connotations. In contrast, to "dress with flair or originality" does not carry negative valence. Also, someone who is creative might not care about conventions regarding dress and appearance. May represent nonconformity instead of schizotypy.)	The appearance of shamans is markedly different from general community members in some, but not all, societies. How a shaman dresses can be mandated by tradition. Some traditions require male shamans to dress as women. Other traditions require shamans to not comb or cut their hair.	Artists assume certain styles of dress to: • Demonstrate nonconformity and display their difference from *das man.* • As a means of original self-expression (sculptor Vari's facial tattoos). • To communicate membership in a certain subset of society such as Surrealist painters Leonor Fini or Salvidor Dali, musicians in the Grunge movement starting mid 1980s, or

			Beatnik poets during the 1950s.
		Many contemporary shamans wear conventional Western garb such as suits; although, based on my own observations, their clothing is often subtly elegant, symbolic, and/or marked by a sophisticated aesthetic sensibility.	Artists generally dress within conventions of artistic subcultures.
(8) Lack of close friends or confidants other than first-degree relatives.		Not found.	Does not apply to most artists; however, introverts tend to have fewer, albeit deeper, friendships.
	Acute discomfort with and reduced capacity for close relationships.	Not found.	Not found.
	Loners (might be subclinical or mild form), introversion, preference or need for solitude.	Often show preference for solitude, including as children or as sign of calling to shamanism. In my limited contact with shamans, most appeared to be capable of quickly entering intensely caring, deeply engaged relationships and relating with direct honesty.	Need for solitude, introverted. Often required to enter creative flow and sustain absorption, probably to maintain certain creativity enhancing brain wave patterns. Generally not psychopathological. Smaller population of potential friends due to nonconforming behaviors, more unique personalities, seeing through social masks, etc.
(9) Excessive social anxiety that does not diminish with familiarity and tends to be associated with paranoid fears rather than negative judgments about self.		Not found.	Not found. May exist in small subset of artists, perhaps including the reclusive poet Emily Dickinson. Requires more data to determine.

Nonetheless, a number of serious researchers pursued research and began achieving results that may eventually prove the existence of some kinds paranormal experiences, psi abilities, and the efficacy of certain kinds of magical thinking (see Anderson, 1966; Astin, Harkness, & Ernst, 2000; Baker, 2004; Bem & Honorton, 1994; Benson et al., 2006; Bierman & Scholte, 2002; Bradley, McCraty, Atkinson, & Gillin, 2008; Dalton, 1997; Goertzel, 2010; Holt, 2007; Honorton, 1972; Krippner, 1962-1963; Krippner & Murphy, 1976; Lorrin, 1994; Moss, 1969; Murphy, 1966; Rabeyron & Watt, 2010; Radin, Machado, & Zangari, 2000; Schlitz & Honorton, 1992; Schmeidler, 1964). Based on the works of these researchers, some beliefs currently categorized as symptoms of schizotypy may eventually be reinterpreted and differentiated to distinguish psychopathology from veridical psi talents.

Inheritable psychopathology: Discussion. Due to a lack of data, we do not know if first-degree relatives of shamans are more likely to have forms of psychopathology found in creators or their families. Most studies on the mental illness of shamans did not look for mild, subclinical, or partial expressions of psychopathology that might place some shamans on spectrums of schizophrenia or bipolar disease.

Richards (2000-2001) mused:

> Yet, we might profitably wonder how many shamans show milder clinical or subclinical characteristics and have a family history of a major psychiatric disorder. Perhaps some ongoing schizotypal characteristics, as one example, could aid in the elective process of intermittently entering trance or reaching an altered state and destabilizing and repatterning their consciousness. It appears a question worth asking. (pp. 126-127)

Such questions await answers from future research. But, at this time, there is accumulating evidence that some behaviors and beliefs previously interpreted as

psychopathological may, instead, represent talents, traits, beliefs, and actions found clustered in shamans, shamanic communities, and subsets of artists. Purported psi talents and paranormal experiences, as related to shamans and artists, are explored further in this dissertation within later considerations of divination, visions, occult practices, mediums, animism, and spirits.

Musical talent and heritability. For Avorgbedor (2004):

> Music is one of the core features that cohere and identify the practice of shamanism worldwide.... shamanism has almost always relied on creative manipulations and extensions of sound. In most cases, sound and sound objects constitute the essential implements and channels of the shaman's multifaceted spiritual journey. Music instruments can also, for example, be temporarily transformed into a shaman's divination mirror, through which the shaman has vivid visual encounters and communicates with disembodied forces. (p. 179)

Shamans might sing or chant rhythmically. They often play a variety of instruments, including strings, conch shell horns, and percussive instruments, such as drums, bells, and rattles. Shamans are also known to create spatial soundscapes through ventriloquism, "bird calls, rustling breezes, voices of domestic animals," "nasal or falsetto" (Avorgbedor, 2004, pp. 182-183) and sounds of wild animals. Shamans in different cultures use different kinds of sound and music in their practices.

One study found that musical talent is partly determined by genes. Ukkola, Onkamo, Karma, and Järvelä (2009) investigated the relationship between musical talent, social bonding, cognitive function, and specific genes:

> In order to understand the neurobiological basis of music in human evolution and communication we analyzed...genes associated with social bonding and cognitive functions in 19 Finnish families...with professional musicians and/or active amateurs. All family members were tested for musical aptitude.... Here we show for the first time that creative functions in music have a strong genetic component in Finnish multigenerational families.... The results suggest that the neurobiology of music perception and production is likely to be related to the pathways affecting intrinsic attachment behavior. (para. 1)

Genes associated with social bonding and cognitive functions were associated with musical aptitude and attachment behavior. Quite possibly, due to the musicality of many shamans, genes associated with musical talent are prevalent in shamanic families. Perhaps the same genes also contribute to actions supporting shamanic community cohesion. However, until further research confirms these possibilities, we cannot be sure.

Furthermore, not all shamans employ music as part of their shamanic practice and there may be differences between shamans who are musicians from shamans who are not musicians. In addition, there may be differences between musicians who play solo and musicians who play in groups, whether within families, informal gatherings, rock bands, or symphony orchestras.

Musical talent is found in contemporary artists who are musicians and in shamans who are musicians. Inherited musical ability is *probably* a property shared by musicians and musical shamans, which is then further influenced by familial environments and other possible epigenetic factors (see Shenk, 2011).

These possible associations between musical talent and genetically inherited traits as related to shamans and contemporary artists, with *possibility* represented via dotted lines, are shown in the Figure 6 Venn diagram.

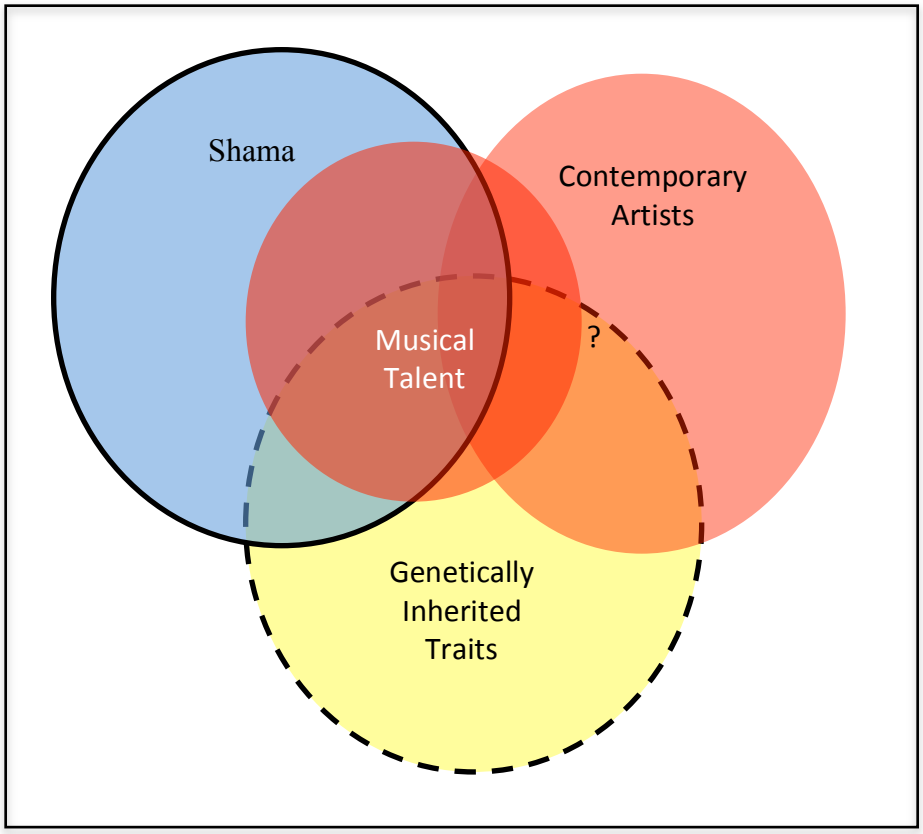


Figure 6. Inherited musical ability is probably a property shared by musicians and musical shamans.

Familial Influences

Future shamans often begin their training via transgenerational family processes that provide early and ongoing education. In some shamanic societies, parents and grandparents of future shamans established nurturing environments that enhanced and supported creativity. Future shamans also learned shamanic skills and knowledge through observation.

> The experiences of the altered state of consciousness are, for the most part, determined by the knowledge that the candidate acquired by observing the actions and listening to the stories and songs of his parent or grandparent-shaman. As the position of a shaman presupposes very good knowledge of the oral tradition,

> shamans usually were famous story-tellers and singers. For that very reason, shaman's children and grandchildren were more familiar with the descriptions of upper or lower worlds and supernatural beings than other children. (Lintrop, 1996)

Thus, older shamans educated future shamans within the sphere of the family. After observing the Nganasan of Siberia in the 1970s, Gracheva reported:

> Before our very eyes...the primary 'schooling' took place in the form of a game of a young child, who already at the age of four had a small drum and a little shaman's cap. At the age of five, he was repeating the shamanic chants of his grandfather with astonishing accuracy. At the age of six, wearing his shaman's cap, he was tying himself to a pole in the tent and leaping like his grandfather, banging a stick against the hook for hanging the cauldron. (In Balzer, 1997, p. 8)

The influences of familial environments on future shamans probably also contributed to the impression that shamanism is inherited. Addressing the topic of genetically transmitted creativity, Kerr and Chopp (1999) recognized:

> It is just as likely that the accumulation of the knowledge and culture of a creative domain is given as a gift across generations as that the genetic material underlying creative behaviors is inherited. That is, what appears to be genetically transmitted characteristics may actually be behaviors learned in a creative family environment. (p. 709)

Anthropological research on the role of familial environments of shamans tend to focus on what kind of *cultural content* is conveyed trangenerationally and what the *transmission pattern* might be (grandmother to granddaughter, uncle to nephew) while psychology and creativity studies[9] look at what kinds of *family processes* and *family structures* produce highly creative individuals.

Studies conducted in the West found that special family position, such as being an only child or an eldest child often enhances a child's creativity (Albert, 1980). In

[9] To prevent the reader from equating data on artists with data on creativity, I want to point out that studies of creativity are not delimited to artistic creativity but also consider fields such as mathematics and science.

addition, creative children often have parents who are nonconforming, with less conventional gender roles, exhibiting less inhibition, without the desire to make good social impressions or to respond to social demands (Domino, 1969; Miller & Gerard, 1979).

These parents are also marked by not being authoritarian or restrictive (Bayard-de-Volo & Fiebert, 1977; Datta & Parloff, 1967; Miller & Gerard, 1979). Such parents encouraged independence in their creative child, trusted their child's decisions, and respected their child (MacKinnon, 1962; Miller & Gerard, 1979). Yet, the relationship between parent and creative child can be marked by distance, which can take the negative form of conflict and tension. Alternatively, distance between parent and creative child may be expressed positively through "emotional space or a lack of overprotectiveness, which may encourage freedom to explore and independence" (Kerr & Chopp, 1999, p. 712).

Parents of creative children often serve as creative role models while also deliberately developing their creative child's talents (Bloom & Sosniak, 1981). These parents might seek out talented and accomplished teachers for their creative child. Thus, within families, the effect of creativity is bidirectional, from adults to children and from children to adults

But, the family environment of highly creative individuals is not always as benign as described thus far. Kerr and Chopp (1999) provided an overview of studies looking at family influence on creativity. Some creative individuals "come from more difficult and distressful family environments" (Kerr & Chopp, p. 711) – which is more common than not (Albert & Runco, 1986). Interpersonal and intrapersonal conflicts may motivate

certain individuals to overcome problems and eventually see problems as the source of creative power.

Unhappy, conflicted families tend to produce certain types and levels of creativity with visual artists often arising from problematic families. Surprisingly, the opposite results were also found. “Equally persuasive studies showing precisely the opposite conditions for the development of creative talent” found that “eminent musicians, artists, scientists, and athletes came from what they perceived to be cohesive, intact families who nurtured the creative individual’s talents” (Kerr & Chopp, 1999, p. 713).

Families that demonstrate flexibility and freedom (almost to the point of being chaotic) demonstrated the highest creativity scores. These families, according to Kerr and Chopp (1999), encouraged openness to experience and allowed enough autonomy for creative children to experience making their own mistakes as a learning process. The results of these studies also indicated that creativity is encouraged in flexible family environments. Mothers who are self-realized and not overly involved or protective are also more likely to encourage creativity in children.

Familial influences: Discussion. Research in anthropology reported ways in which some shamanic skills and knowledge are transmitted, within some families, from older generations to children. Many of these skills involved learning traditional art forms, myths, epics, songs, and dances. Because future shamans are often from families with older practicing shamans, in part due to the influence of family environments, shamanism can appear to be inherited.

Creativity studies considered family processes and structures from a psychological point of view. Authoritarian parents are more likely to produce children with the lowest showing of creativity (Kerr & Chopp, 1999; Morelock & Feldman, 1999).

Conceivably, any type of creativity promoting family environment could produce a shaman, with different kinds and degrees of shamanic creativity resulting from different kinds of family structures and processes. It is possible, but without substantiation at present, that certain kinds of family structures and processes could produce shamans that are everyday creators, most likely in the subcategory of middle C or pro-C creativity, while a different kind of family structure and process would produce the rare shaman that is an eminent creator.

As shown in Figure 7, we can assume that there are familial influences on the development of shamanic creative persons and creative processes; however, we know very little about what these influences are.

There is psychological data on South Korean families that produce shamans. These families are chronically stressed. The stress collects and concentrates in the family's "lightening rod," who is usually female. Then, the woman or girl becomes sick with the Korean culture-bound syndrome *shin-byung,* literally "spirit (*shin*) possession (*byung*)" or "divine illness" (Legerski, 2006, p. 144). At present, we do not know whether this pattern also occurs in shamanic families that are not Korean.

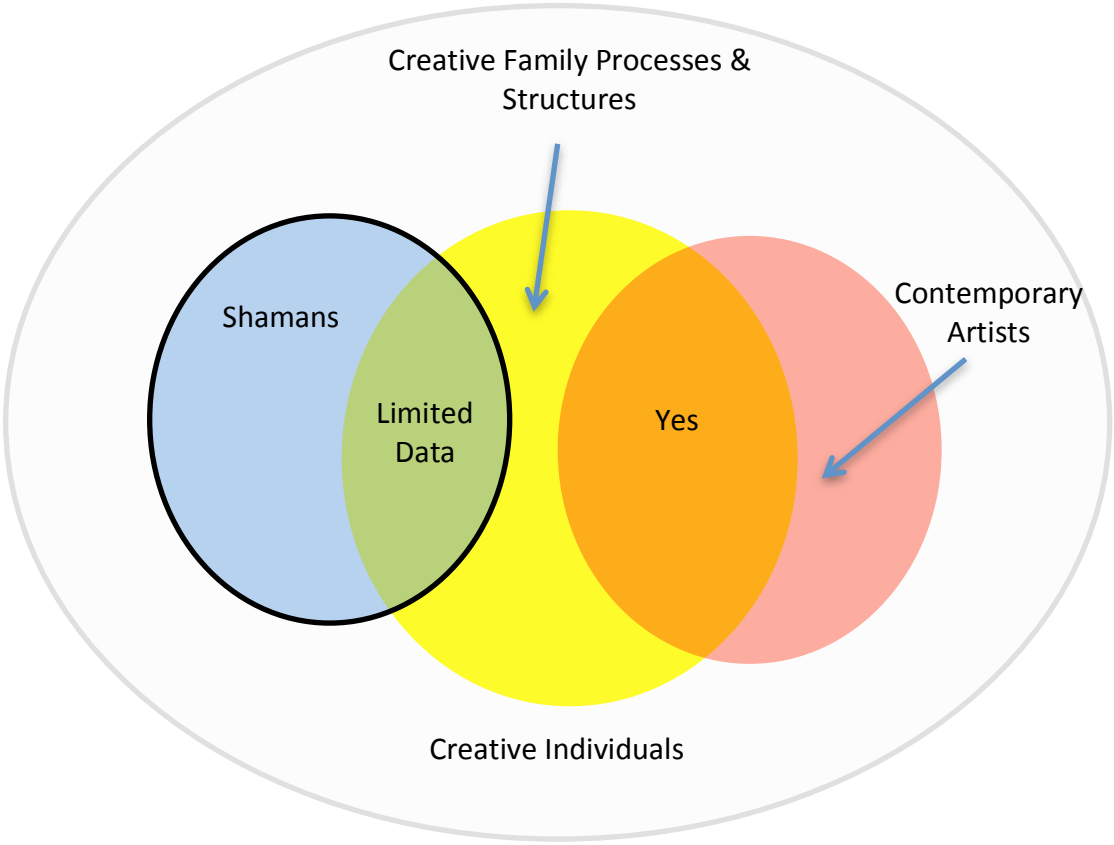


Figure 7. Family structures and processes positively influence creativity. There is limited data on the influence of family structures and processes on shamanic creativity.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no additional studies considering the family processes and structures that produce creative shamans. We do not currently know if shamans come from families that are similar to the variety of families producing contemporary artists.

Because creativity studies has already produced numerous studies on artistic talent, children, and families, similar studies using the same kinds of assessments could be conducted with families that produce shamans. Then, “apples to apples” kinds of comparisons could be made using the same constructs. Certainly, this indicates many possibilities for future research.

Inheritance and Familial Influences: Summary

The preceding section compared shamans, contemporary artists, and creative individuals via inheritance, genetics, and family processes and structures. These comparisons were performed to determine if (1) genetic inheritance or familial influences could contribute towards the social designation of a shaman, and (2) if the same properties could also socially designate a contemporary artist as a shaman.

At this time, as represented in Table 4, there is little evidence in the data considered showing similarities between shamans and contemporary artists or shamans and creative individuals via inheritance, family transmission, or family structures and processes – despite common beliefs that all three categories of individuals inherit their talents.

There are, however, a few exceptions. Shamans, artists, and creative individuals all show higher than average rates of purported psi abilities in reports and experimental studies. Purported psi talent is a trait that tends to be clustered within families (Bynum, 1984). Also, most shamans are musically talented, a trait partly influenced by genetics according to one study conducted in Finland. But, musical talents as well as purported psi abilities are not exclusive to shamans and thus cannot indicate social designation.

Table 4

Comparison of Inherited Traits and Familial Influences

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Creative Individuals
Society commonly believes vocation or trait is inherited.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Family Clusters	Often	Found frequently but not always present.	Often
Caste of Extended Family	Rarely	No	No
Family Patterns of Transmission	Often	Not found	Not found
Heritability of Creativity	Unknown	Yes, partly due to genetics.	Yes, partly due to genetics.
Psychopathology, especially 1st degree relatives.	Maybe, but unknown.	More often than general population.	More often than general population in eminent or high C creators.
Milder, subclinical psychopathology	Possibly, but unknown.	More often than general population. A minority of artists showed mild, subclinical, or few signs of pathology.	More often than general population in eminent or high C creators. Does not appear to apply to everyday creativity.
Schizotypal symptoms	Yes, but what appears to be symptoms of schizotypy are usually consistent with cultural norms.	Yes, typically magical thinking and unusual experiences. May be cultural norms for artists.	Yes, in subsets of eminent or high C creators.
Superior Mental Health	Often	Most artists are mentally healthy. A subset probably has superior mental health.	Not found, possibly in a subset. Everyday creativity can improve mental health.
Psi abilities or experiences reported.	Often	More often than general population.	More often than general population.
Inherited musical talent.	Maybe, but presently unknown.	Yes, within a subset of musicians.	Yes, within subsets of everyday and eminent musicians.

Familial Influences	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transgenerational transmission of knowledge and skills.	Often	Occurs in families with artistic vocational clusters.	Can occur in many kinds of creative families in many different fields.
Influence of family processes and structures.	Unknown except for transmission of shamanic knowledge and skills.	Yes	Yes

Shamans differed from contemporary artists and eminent creative individuals in family patterns of transmission. In contrast to artists and eminent creators, most shamans enjoy superior mental health. While we can assume that there are influences on the development of creative shamans from the familial environment, we know very little about what these influences are and we do not know if shamans and artists come from similar family environments.

When further studies are performed, I anticipate that most *traditional* shamanic acts will be categorized as everyday creativity and placed within the subcategory of middle C creativity, which results in "products appreciated in terms of interpretive skill, mastery of technical forms, distinctive style, and success in achieving a… goal" (Morelock & Feldman, 1999, p. 449) or within the subcategory of Pro-c creativity, a level of professional expertise that is not domain transforming. If most traditional shamanic acts are categorized as middle C or Pro-C creativity, then this might provide one reason why more shamans appear to have superior mental health in comparison to subsets of contemporary artists and eminent creators.

A smaller subset of shamans do qualify as eminent creators, as seen in the previously cited example of Norval Morrisseau who invented a new style of

contemporary art based on a traditional art form. Another – very exciting – possibility is that there is a distinct kind of creativity associated with shamanism that is not described by the current categories of creativity.

There are many studies on how certain kinds of creativity are often associated with, and partly caused by, certain kinds of family structures and processes. These studies of contemporary artists and creative individuals were conducted using methods and assessments that could be used, in future research, to study shamans. Then, there would be similar studies and data for comparing contemporary artists and shamans.

We also do not know about how epigenetic processes, the activation and deactivation of genes, from "environmental stimuli, nutrition, hormones, nerve impulses, and other genes" (Shenk, 2011, p. 22), influence shamans and contemporary artists especially with regards to the interaction of familial influences and inherited traits.

Krippner (2009c) considered the link between shamanism, inheritance, and creativity, writing:

> If shamanic capacities, at least in part, have a genetic basis, one would expect them to manifest in the population at large. Some people with shamanic propensities find their way into the health care professions; these individuals can develop and express their healing capacities as physicians, psychotherapists, or nurses. But I suspect that far more of these proto-shamans become performing artists…. (p. 109)

In the future, such suspicions will be confirmed or denied as we gain knowledge about the genetic and familial transmission of shamanic traits.

Calling

Recognizing a calling to shamanism is one way in which shamanic communities socially designate future shamans. Calling may be recognized via signs at birth or during childhood, including conditions of birth, physical signs, and childhood signs. Different

shamanic societies recognize different sources of calling, including communications from spirits, spirit possession, dreams, shamanic illness, inspiration, or visions. Any form of calling, recognized by a shaman's community, is sufficient for indicating the presence of social designation.

Hereafter, the different signs of calling to shamanism are explained, supplemented with examples, and compared to ways in which contemporary artists might be called to shamanism.

Signs at Birth or During Childhood

I was born, I was born to sing for you.

From the song "Magnificent" (U2, 2009).

Conditions of birth. A community may interpret atypical circumstances around a child's birth as signs of a future shaman. Gray (2011) described a shaman with whom she is personally acquainted. When the shaman was born, his mother was 60-years-old and she gave birth on a riverbank. The community immediately identified this unusual situation as evidence that the child would become a shaman.

Physical signs. At birth, physical signs may reveal the future shaman's destiny. These signs can include birthmarks (Vitebsky, 2001), extra digits (Stutley, 2003), or webbed digits (Gallagher & Ashcraft, 2006). As I understand it, physical signs of calling are rare and are not necessary or sufficient to indicate social designation. Contemporary Western cultures do not have similar methods that identify, at birth, future artists or, more to the point, artists with shamanlike propensities.

Contemporary artist Jóska Soós (1921-2008) was originally from a traditional shamanic community in Hungary. Soós was born inside a caul and remained attached, through an umbilical cord, to his mother for 20 minutes (Ingels, 2004). The village

shaman recognized the significance of the unusual birth and began training Soós at an early age. Soós became an artist after seeing a vision while working in a coal mine during the 1940s but did not begin shamanizing until after his wife left him in 1975 (Ingels).

Childhood experiences. Shamans reported childhood experiences of nightmares, night terrors, vivid dreams, cruel treatment by others, odd thoughts (Schmidt, 1996), an uncommon predilection for smoking sacred tobacco (Walter & Neumann Fridman, 2004), being unusually thoughtful (Chamberlain, 1896), purported psi abilities, and paranormal experiences. Of course, children who are not called to be shamans and children who are not members of shamanic cultures also report most of these experiences. Nonetheless, these experiences may be the initial glimmers of constellations of traits, behaviors, and beliefs that are worth noting and may overlap other sets such as certain types of creativity, schizotypy, and transliminality. These topics are covered more extensively later in this dissertation.

To determine if contemporary artists show the same signs, during childhood, that are used to socially designate prospective shamans, we must ask what signs of a future shaman might be evident during an artist's childhood? To answer this question, we must ask what are the childhood signs of a future shaman?

Talent. Simply defined, talent is a "superior aptitude or ability in a worthwhile line of human endeavor" (Feldhusen, 1999, p. 773). Childhood shamanic talent might be seen in early healing abilities (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) or musical talent.

Early recognition of artistic talent, during the childhood of artists, is common. The Renaissance historian, Georgio Vasari (1550/1912-1914), reported numerous demonstrations of talent during artists' childhoods, generally seen in unusually skillful

drawing, sometimes executed by the sons of poor shepherds by making marks in the dirt with sticks. The same pattern is seen in the story of Japanese artist, Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849). Such talent, in of itself, is not necessarily related to shamanism.

Psi. As a child and future shaman, Norval Morrisseau (Beaton, 2008; Dewdney, 1963; Leuthold, 2011; Morrisseau & Dewdney, 2005; Petten, 2008; Sellar, 2005) listened to his grandfather's traditional stories set within a shamanic cosmology. For Morrisseau, the stories built a bridge to the Ojibwe past. In late adolescence, Morrisseau filled his home with drawings depicting the characters in his grandfather's stories.

But, instead of indicating a call to shamanism, Morrisseau's early drawings were interpreted as dangerously magical in their abilities to call spirits – spirits, it was believed, that threatened to possess him. Tribal elders considered Morrisseau's talent dangerous instead of valuable. Morrisseau ceased drawing due to taboos and fears that his drawings were conjuring spirits (Petten, 2008).

After a period of hardship and during recovery from illness, Morrisseau dreamt of his people's tradition of fasting during solitude. Morrisseau believed that this dream provided him with protection from hostile spirits that had tried to possess him (Dewdney, 1963). He interpreted additional dreams and visions as indicating his calling to shamanism and began creating visual art again (Nokomis, 2007-2011).

Shamans reported that, during childhood, they found lost objects, experienced precognition, received advice from special spirit companions (Stephen & Suryani, 2000), received premonitions (Schmidt, 2006), and saw prophetic visions (Chamberlain, 1896). Shamanic communities may view purported psi talents and paranormal experiences as evidence of calling to shamanism.

In the archival documents about contemporary artists considered, purported psi talents during childhood are rarely reported. There are, however, a few exceptions. English poet and visual artist William Blake reported seeing spirits, in the forms of angels during his childhood (Damon, 1924). *The Deadfall* (Hughes, 1995), a story by British Poet Laureate Ted Hughes (1930-1998) included a related series of paranormal experiences that supposedly occurred when he was 7-years-old (Cardeña, Iribas-Rudin, & Reijman, 2012).

Purported psi abilities and paranormal experiences were reported by a subset of adult contemporary artists (see Cardeña et al., 2012) including this author. Perhaps, for some of these artists, these purported experiences started in childhood.

Solitude. As children, future shamans often demonstrated a preference for solitude (Chamberlain, 1896). Wanting to be alone can also be a symptom of shamanic illness. Prospective shamans who do not suffer a shamanic illness may subject themselves to privations such as solitude to trigger visions (Chamberlain, p. 315).

Aua Igjugârjuk, an Eskimo shaman, remembered:

> Then I sought solitude, and here I soon became very melancholy. I would sometimes fall to weeping, and feel unhappy without knowing why. Then for no reason, all would suddenly be changed, and I felt a great, inexplicable joy, a joy so powerful that I could not restrain it, but had to break into song, a mighty song, with only room for one word: joy, joy! And I had to use the full strength of my voice. And then in the midst of such a fit of mysterious and overwhelming delight I became a shaman, not knowing myself how it came about. But I was a shaman. I could see and hear in a totally different way. (Igjugârjuk & Rasmussen, 1930/2004, p. 82)

In his consideration of shamanism, Walsh (2007) shared his personal reaction to solitude:

> These extreme mood swings and lack of control are common initial reactions to solitude. After my own first retreat, I wrote of experiencing ‘sudden apparently unprecipitated wide mood swings to complete polar emotions. Shorn of all my

> props and distractions there was just no way to pretend that I had more than the faintest inkling of self-control over either thoughts or feelings.'
>
> Those who face themselves in solitude quickly appreciate just how restless and out of control the untrained mind is. (p. 63)

In shamanic societies, a desire for solitude can be interpreted positively as a calling to shamanism or a desire to receive visions and communicate with spirits. In Western society, where extraversion is valued, introversion can be seen as a social liability and a deficit to be overcome (Rauch, 2006).

Solitude often marks the childhood of creators, especially visual artists and writers in particular, due to experiencing themselves as different and "early isolation and marginality" (Kerr & Chopp, 1999, p. 710) amidst age peers. Nonetheless, solitude is different than loneliness, that painful gulf between "desired and accomplished patterns of social networks" (Margalit, 2010, p. 5) and a sense of disconnection and alienation "from positive people, places, and things" (Woodward, 1988, p. 4).

Instead, solitude provides uninterrupted time and concentration that artists – of any age – require to hone their skills, slip into creative flow, delve deep into the psyche, come to know one's self more fully, and achieve greater integration. As Walsh (2007) observed, "the cacophonous demands and distractions of society usually hinder deep inner searching and self-knowledge" (p. 62). Solitude protects artists from social pressures to conform (Thalbourne, 1998) and, in the opinion of this artist-researcher, boring conversations and uninteresting activities.

Transliminality. Shamans and artists are high in transliminality, a "hypothesized tendency for psychological material to cross (trans) thresholds (limines) into or out of consciousness" (Thalbourne & Houran, 2000, p. 853) especially of an affective and ideational kind (Thalbourne, Delin, & Bassett, 1994). Transliminality is

also associated with beliefs in psi and predicts a higher success rate in tests of paranormal abilities (Storm & Thalbourne, 1998-1999).

Transliminality is seen in people who score higher than control populations in creativity, mysticism, anomalous experience, dream recall, magical thinking, schizotypy, hypomania, depression, and manic-depression (Thalbourne & Delin, 1999). Transliminality also accompanies thinner personal boundaries (Thalbourne & Delin).

Thinner boundaries are associated with a blending or a kind of crossover of sensory material, thoughts and feelings, physical body boundary and personal or surrounding space, past and present, waking and sleeping, genders, group identities, dreams, fantasy and reality (Hartmann, 2011). The positive results of thinner personal boundaries plus transliminality are extra-sensitivity to environmental conditions, more active intuition, a freer imagination, and heightened empathy (Thalbourne & Delin, 1999).

Signs at birth or during childhood: Discussion. Childhood signs of shamanism are recognized due to the community's traditional belief structures, which differ from society to society, but may include unusual birth conditions or physical signs on a baby's body.

While the shamanic potential of some children was recognized through mythologized interpretations of birth events, such interpretations were not found for contemporary Western artists. However, metaphoric birth, as in Joseph Beuys's transformation from Nazi pilot into postwar German artist-shaman, is evident.

Lacking a shamanic community with a shamanic cosmology, Beuys creatively invented a glamorous myth that empowered his charismatic shaman role. It is not

uncommon for artists to accentuate, if not outright invent or at least slant, information about their origins. The myths act like cloaks sewn with magical symbols, setting the artist apart, announcing the presence of someone who is special due to a combination of uncommon powers and talents.

Such self-mythologizing is not necessarily a misrepresentation made with dishonest intentions. Instead, the myths create a state of expectation, a psychological set within the art audience increasing the likelihood of a shamanic experience. It is the difference between the medical doctor wearing a white coat and stethoscope and the doctor wearing a tennis skirt and sunglasses.

As children, subsets of contemporary artists and many shamans demonstrated traits and talents indicating their future vocations including musicality and many qualities of transliminality such as purported psi abilities, aspects of the creative process, and desire for solitude. Some future shamans show a talent for healing, a trait not found in data considered regarding contemporary artists.

Except for contemporary artists who come from traditional shamanic cultures, most contemporary artists do not grow up in communities that understand or practice shamanism. Thus, there is no means of recognizing shamanic talent in children who are also artistically talented.

A childhood demonstration of talent in healing was noted in one report regarding shamans but was not found in biographies of artists. The absence of data on artistically talented children who also demonstrated a talent in healing does not mean that the phenomenon does not exist. Rather, the absence of data on childhood healing talents in future artists may simply be due to biographers not recognizing the importance of this

trait for a subset of artists. Furthermore, some artists may be reluctant to publicly divulge paranormal experiences.

Figures 8 shows similarities and differences in traditional methods of identifying future shamans through childhood signs including healing abilities, musical talent, and transliminality.

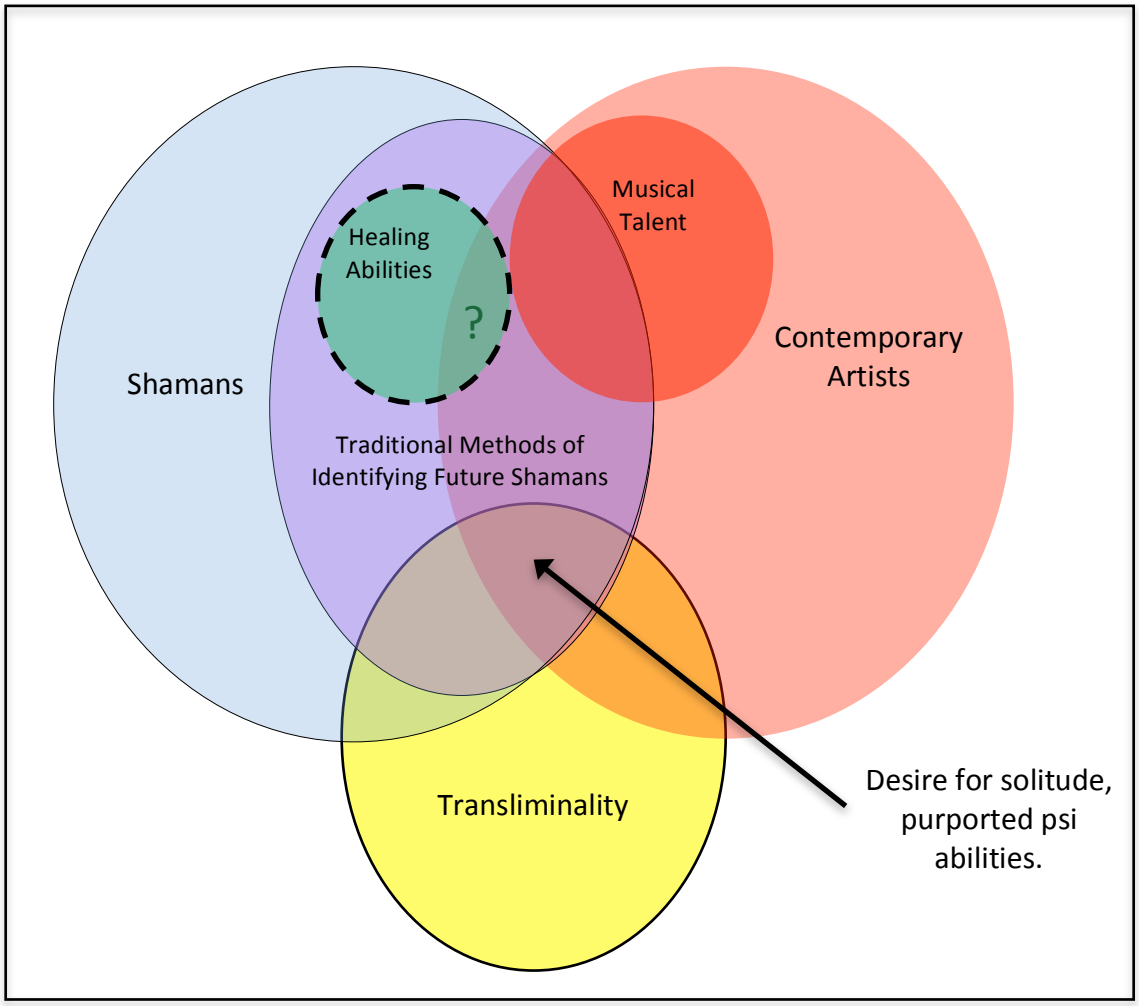


Figure 8. Childhood signs of shamanism are also seen in subsets of contemporary artists, including musical talent, aspects of transliminality, and possibly healing abilities.

Artists such as Joseph Beuys (Beuys & Harlan, 2004; Ruggiero, 2010; Walters, 2010), Lauren Raine (2009), Alex Gray (Fox, 2011; Raine, 1988), Norval Morrisseau

(Beaton, 2008; Redbird, 2009), Kim Kum Hwa (Kim, 2003; Sung-nam, 1992), and many others make art with the intention to heal problems in individuals and society. Perhaps, as children, these artists demonstrated their motivation to heal. Here is yet another opportunity for future research.

The cluster of traits and experiences comprising transliminality includes extrasensitivity to environmental stimuli. The perfect antidote to environmental overstimulation is solitude, leading those high in transliminality to embark on a "Quest for Silence" (Puhle & Parker, 2004, p. 9). Solitude permits an escape from distraction or feeling overwhelmed. Silence and solitude also provide opportunities to listen to one's inner voice, receive information that crosses the threshold into awareness, and a chance to process what is received. For subsets of shamans and artists, solitude provides an opportunity for what is reported as communications with spirits, one kind of anomalous experience associated with transliminality.

My suspicion is that artists and shamans, whether as children or as adults, are not attracted to solitude in of itself. Rather, artists and shamans need the kinds of experiences that occur only during solitude. In my conversations with art students and artists experiencing creative block, I learned that their inability to tolerate solitude, and an unwillingness or inability to encounter whatever material might arise when alone, could be the greatest impediment to creative work.

There is an opportunity for future research exploring associations between childhood transliminality, shamanic properties, and adult artistic creativity.

Transliminality also embraces types of psychopathology associated with artists and highly creative individuals. Recent studies did not find psychopathology in practicing

shamans. However, data regarding South Korean women called to shamanism (Kendall, 1987) as well as data on some apparently psychological forms of shamanic illness seem to indicate finite periods of psychopathology or psychological instability in some individuals elected to shamanhood (Stephen & Suryani, 2000).

Are these transient forms of psychopathology similar to what is found associated with artists, creators, and their relatives? Why does accepting the call to shamanism, training as an apprentice, undergoing initiation, and undertaking a shamanic practice apparently result in a higher degree of mental health than mental health status prior to accepting the call? How do these processes transform individuals so that, at times, shamans have superior mental health compared to other individuals in their communities? Why is the affliction of mental illness generally not life long for individuals who successfully become shamans?

The Pink Dress, detail, Denita Benyshek, reverse-painted, collaged, and engraved glass.

Calling by Spirits

While many shamanic communities recognize a calling to shamanism that supposedly comes directly from spirits, there are differences in how purported spirits contact candidates. Spirits may communicate a shamanic calling through dreams, possession, visions, or illnesses. These ways of being called are recognized by the candidate's community and this recognition is a means of socially designating potential future shamans.

What are these spirits? In the West, *spirit* has several related yet distinct definitions. *Spirit* (1989) is variably defined as:

> The animating or vital principle...that which gives life to the physical organism, in contrast to its purely material elements; the breath of life.... incorporeal or immaterial being, as opposed to body or matter; being or intelligence conceived as distinct from, or independent of, anything physical or material.... The soul of a person, as commended to God, or passing out of the body, in the moment of death....
>
> A supernatural, incorporeal, rational being or personality, usually regarded as imperceptible at ordinary times to the human senses, but capable of becoming visible at pleasure, and freq. conceived as troublesome, terrifying, or hostile to mankind....
>
> A being of this nature imagined as possessing and actuating a person.... In generalized sense: A being essentially incorporeal or immaterial.... The active or essential principle or power of some emotion, frame of mind, etc., as operating on or in persons....
>
> A particular character, disposition, or temper existing in, pervading, or animating, a person or set of persons; a special attitude or bent of mind characterizing men individually or collectively....
>
> The immaterial intelligent or sentient element or part of a person, freq[uently] in implied or expressed contrast to the body.

Spencer and Gillen (1899) reported that the Arunta and Ilpirra tribes of north central Australia believe in three different forms of calling to shamanism: calling from

the *Iruntarinia* or spirits, calling made by the *Oruncha* who are a special class of spirit individuals of a mischievous nature, and calling from initiated shamans.

Calling through Dreams

"Dreams that signify the shamanic vocation are not ordinary dreams," Sumegi (2008) wrote, "they are recognizable dreams with repeated themes, familiar to the social group and invested with shared interpretation" (p. 33). Grim (1987) differentiated dreams of non-shamans from dreams conveying a call to shamanism. While all members of the Ojibwe tribe received "wisdom and knowledge" from dreams presenting communications from spirits, the "vocational call" to shamanism has greater "scope and depth" (Grim, p. 103). Grim further explained, "Both the receipt of a sacred dream and the implementation of the manitou [deity] revelation in that dream earns the Ojibwe shaman the tribal sanction" (pp. 103-104).

Moreover, to benefit the Ojibwe tribe, the initiation dreams of shamans must be dramatized: "Their presentations are an open revelation of their contact with the numinous regions through dream"; future shamans are "mandated to reveal their dreams in rituals, and thus they open themselves to tribal sanction" (Grim, 1987, p. 105).

Dream themes indicating a calling to shamanism include witnessing the beginning of the world, mythic times, traveling to the center of the world, the underworld, or the cosmic tree, at times under the guidance of a spirit (Lewis & Oliver, 2009). The thematic content of dreams indicating a calling to shamanism varies from shamanic culture to shamanic culture.

Mandaza Augustine Kandemwa "was born a *Svikiro* (in Shona, his native tongue) - a carrier of many earth and water spirits, and a *Mohndoro* - one who is in constant

prayer on behalf of others" (Society for the Study of Shamanism, 2011), but he did not become a shaman until midlife.

> During his tenure in the [British South African] police force, Mandaza was afflicted with severe water spirit disease, understood to be the call of the ancestors to practice as a traditional healer. He was then a staunchly religious Christian and did not heed the call and so suffered years of disorientation even as he rose in the ranks of the police. Eventually he dreamed he was to be initiated by an Ndebele nganga—the Ndebele being the historical enemies of the Shona (Mandaza's tribe). A few days later, his job transferred him to an Ndebele-speaking part of the country where he was approached by a stranger, a nganga, who ultimately took him through the rites of initiation. (Theosophical Society in America, 2011)

In this example, several forms of calling were combined. Mandaza was recognized as carrying spirits at birth. He later suffered shamanic illness caused by a water spirit, dreamt of initiation, and then was initiated by a shaman.

Many people, especially children, speak of their dream of becoming an artist in the sense of a desired future vocation. Julia Cameron (2002) wrote *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* for individuals who carried the dream of becoming an artist but had not yet actualized their dream. Although Cameron did not conduct formal research, she writes from personal experience as an artist and as an art educator:

> These artists, shadow artists, through no fault of their own, hear the distant piping of the dream but are unable to make their way through the cultural maze to find it.
>
> For all shadow artists, life may be a discontented experience, filled with a sense of missed purpose and unfulfilled promise.

Cameron (2002) believed the "truest dream for ourselves is always God's will for us…. It is the inner commitment to be true to ourselves and follow our dream that triggers the support of the universe" (Recovering a Sense of Faith, Trusting section, para. 5). But, when the dream of being an artist is not made a reality, "The flow through our lives will be characterized by spurts of abundance and long spells of drought, when our

supply dwindles to a mere trickle" (Cameron, para. 5). In Cameron's opinion, dreaming of being an artist represents the will of a deity, a kind of calling from spirit.

Calling through dreams: Discussion. I do not know of anyone who dreamt during sleep of becoming an artist and then changed vocations. Such individuals may certainly exist. But, more relevant to the purposes of this study is this question: Do contemporary artists with shamanic potential dream like candidates for shamanism?

Within a traditional shamanic culture, certain kinds of dreams are understood to indicate a calling to shamanism or represent initiation into shamanism. These are "usually stereotyped in terms of the shaman's traditional culture" (Lewis & Oliver, 2009, p. 10) in that certain subjects, images, or actions occur.

But, without a shamanic culture, a contemporary artist will not have shamanic structures of meaning available to interpret, for example, dreams of spirits or dead ancestors as calling to shamanism. Without the context of shamanism, artists might not understand that dreams of dismemberment, disembowelment, suffering, death, reconstruction, and resurrection might represent initiation dreams. My dream of the White Mare, shared in Chapter 1, could be interpreted as a journey led by a spirit. But, more research is needed to compare dreams of artistically talented children to dreams of children who demonstrate shamanic talents.

Art historians Tucker (1992), Levy (1993), and Weiss (1995) identified numerous shamanic themes in contemporary artwork. Inasmuch as art is a kind of dreaming awake (Tucker, 1992), themes and symbols of artwork could also be compared to shamanic dream content.

At this time, there appears to be inadequate data to compare dreams of those elected to shamanism in traditional cultures to dreams of contemporary artists, or future artists, especially contemporary artists who might develop shamanic traits.

Purported Spirit Possession

> Indians scattered on a dawn's highway bleeding
> Ghosts crowd the young child's fragile eggshell mind.
>
> Jim Morrison (Doors, 1969), *Dawn's Highway*

According to Korean folk belief, shamanic candidates feel an ancestral god's spirit entering their body and taking possession (Legerski, 2006). Usually accompanied by many psychological and somatic symptoms, purported spirit possession may only be cured by accepting the purported spirit and committing to becoming a shaman. Rejecting the spirit and refusing to accept the calling to shamanism results in permanent insanity (Legerski, 2006).

Kim Kum Hwa. The famous South Korean shaman, or *mudang*, Kim Kum Hwa (also referred to as Kum-Hwa Kim, Kim Keum Hwa, and Kim Kum Hwa in the research literature; Mochel et al., 2010) recounted her story of becoming a shaman (Kim, 2003). At age 12, she became ill with spirit sickness, showing a split personality, constantly sick, unable to eat, and vomiting blood.

When she received the initiation ceremony to become a *mudang*, she was cured. Kim practiced shamanism for over 60 years despite the intense social stigma and persecution South Korean shamans were subjected to for many years.

Kim's career as a *chontong gonyeon yesulin* (performer of traditional arts) started when she entered a traditional arts competition in part to counteract the stigma and life

disruption she experienced as a shaman. Integrating song, dance, drumming, costumes, and sets, Kim publicly performed rituals previously performed only in private. Her work resulted in the recognition of a shamanic ritual for fisherman as an art form.

Anthropologists and other scholars supported her efforts as a performer and she became internationally known as a shaman-performance artist (Cheng, 2010). Now she is recognized as a South Korean National Living Treasure and her annual performance of the ritual for fishermen is a national event.

Artists and purported spirit possession. J. J. Garth Wilkinson, the first editor for William Blake, believed the English poet to be a spirit medium "whose work was ruined by his indiscriminate submission to supermundane 'controls'" (Damon, 1924, p. 196). Nonetheless, Blake's supposed experiences of telepathy, visions, automatic writing, precognition, and premonitions contributed to the creation of great poetry and extraordinary visual art.

The legendary rock singer, Jim Morrison, claimed he was a shaman based on an incident from his childhood. "Morrison often recounted the accident story and many of his friends believed it" (Riordan & Prochnicky, 1992, p. 192). Morrison's producer, Paul Rothchild, shared:

> As a child he [Morrison] was driving with his parents, and there was a truck full of Indians that had crashed and overturned. There was a medicine man dying at the side of the road, and Jim, this four- or five-year-old child *vividly remembered* a mystical experience when, as the shaman died, his spirit entered Jim's body. That was the pivotal event of his entire life. He always viewed himself as the shaman, having mystical powers and the ability to see through many façades to the truth. It was this power that drove him. This was the great force that pushed his life and took him out of the rigid, military environment of his youth and turned him into a seer. (Riordan & Prochnicky, 1992, p. 193)

This tale links the reported experience of spirit possession, mysticism, and other signs of transliminality with Morrison's transformation into a role he viewed as shamanic.

During the last performance of The Doors, the rock band that Morrison belonged to, observers reported that Morrison's spirit appeared to abandon him. Ray Manzarek, the keyboardist, said, "Everyone who was there saw it, man. He lost all his energy about midway through the set. He hung on the microphone and it just slipped away. You could actually see it leave him. He was drained" (as cited in Krippner, 2003b, p. 4).

Riordan and Prochnicky (1992) perceived Morrison as a full-fledged shaman based on a definition of shaman primarily dependent on achieving a state of ecstasy. In contrast, Krippner (2009c) compared Morrison to several constructs defining shaman, then concluded that Morrison failed to qualify as a shaman partly because Morrison did not demonstrate concern for his audience. Soon thereafter, Faris and Faris (2010) diagnosed the shamanizing of Jim Morrison as a pseudo-identity resulting from a borderline personality disorder. How Morrison's life is framed by shamanism depends on who is holding the camera, what kind of camera it is, and which direction the camera is pointed.

Visionary encounters with spirits were also reported by subsets of visual artists and poets. American beat poet Allen Ginsberg (1926-1997) felt himself called to poetry through a vision:

> In 1948, as Ginsberg was reflecting on what he should do with his life, he had an important revelation. A voice he recognized as William Blake's recited several Blake poems, and it seemed to the young poet that he had been allowed to peer into universal experience. (Halpern, 1994, p. 296)

Although Ginsberg interpreted his experience as a calling to write poetry, this was not the same as a calling to shamanism.

A subset of contemporary artists and some shamans experienced purported spirit possession. There are traditional shamanic cultures that have structures for interpreting some experiences of spirit possession as indications of a calling to shamanism. These interpretive structures do not exist within nontraditional societies, where there is no culturally established means by which the experience of spirit possession would be interpreted as a call to shamanism.

Yet, poetry is often part of the shamanic creative process.

> Besides singing and playing instruments, ceremonial use of musical sound includes the human voice reciting shamanic poetry, probably the most concentrated use of word sounds. Tuvan shaman Ai-Churek Oyun says that each human language belongs to its people, but that there is also a shamanic language that crosses the boundaries of human language and is about communication with spirit. These sounds, which can invoke energies of the earth, of ancestral spirits, and of personal energy, make for simpler and clearer communication with spirit. Shamans arrange these sounds in conscious patterns as they create poetry. Just as shamanic music is improvisational, nonritual songs and melodies also incorporate improvisation. Musical improvisation goes hand in hand with poetic improvisation, created in response to information received from the spiritual world. (van Deusen, 2004, p. 140)

Shamanism is found in all hunter-gatherer societies (Winkelman, 2000). After the invention of agriculture, more complex social organizations evolved, society became more hierarchical, stratified, and specialized (Winkelman). Many of the functions once played by a single shaman were split into derivative roles such as political leader, doctor, priest, musician, actor, dancer, herbalist, masseuse, and astrologer.

Perhaps Ginsberg's calling to poetry is a fragment of what, in hunter-gatherer societies, would be a calling to shamanism. Inasmuch as shamanic functions are now split into many roles, there may still be occasional, fragmented, and isolated (without the

context of a shamanic community) signs of contemporary artists being called to shamanism. Nontraditional societies in the West are more likely to recognize an artist's relationship with spirit(s) when that relationship is conceptualized as inspiration.

The various relationships of calling through purported spirit possession, in shamans and in contemporary artists, are represented in Figure 9.

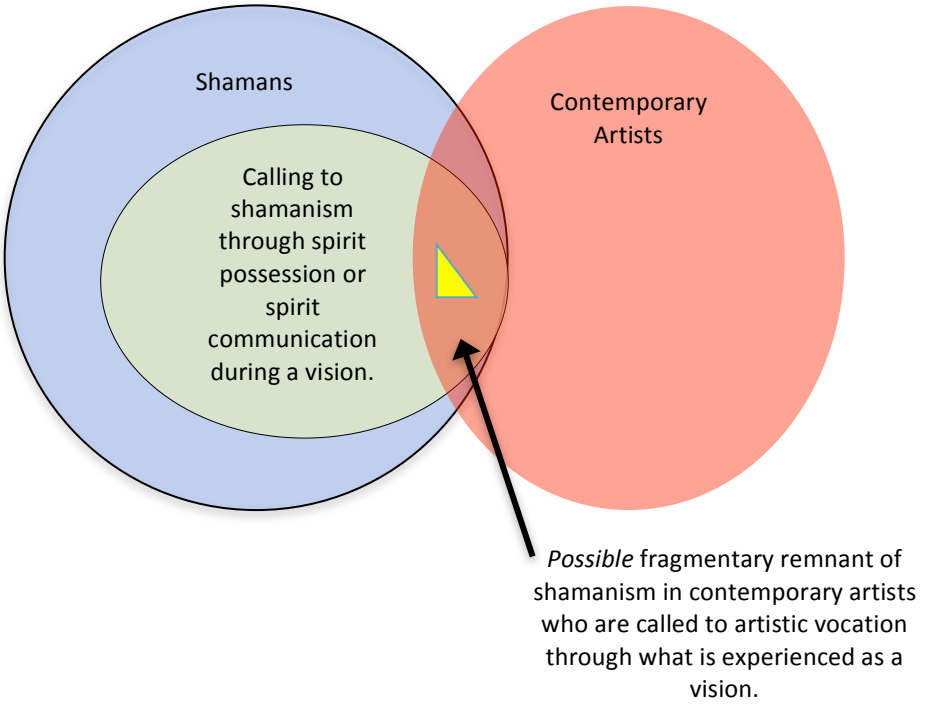


Figure 9. Shamans sometimes receive their calling through spirit possession or spirit communications received during visions, while a few artists reported being called to be artists through visions. .

The creative process of inspiration is explored further in Chapter 7, "Obtaining Information and Unavailable Ways."

Shamanic Illness

A serious illness may indicate a calling to shamanism. Many societies, such as the Tlingit of southeast Alaska (2008) or the Zulu who reside in present day South Africa and surrounding countries (Jonaitis, 1986), place structures of meaning upon certain kinds of diseases and visions as a calling to shamanism (Gallagher & Ashcraft, 2006).

In the research literature, such diseases are referred to as shamanic illness or initiatory illness (D. Walter, 2003). The social recognition of these illnesses as calling to shamanism represents a means of designating *potential* shamans – not everyone who is called to shamanism successfully completes training and initiation.

I asked the Hmong black cap shaman, Changvang Her, how to identify a sickness that indicates a calling to shamanism. Her (2011) told me the Hmong distinguish shamanic illness from non-shamanic illness via two methods: (1) a shamanic illness cannot be improved or cured by conventional medical doctors or allopathic treatments and (2) a spirit will directly inform the sick individual about the calling to shamanism.

Unusual or aberrant behaviors may also be viewed as shamanic illness by some societies. Van Gennep (as cited in Benedict, 1938/1958) observed that "young persons who, having suffered for years from lingering illness (usually of a nervous character), at last feel a call to take to shamanistic practice, and by this means overcome the disease" (p. 55). In "prospective shamans," noted Vitebsky (1995), shamanic illness "leads to an acceptance of their new role which allows them to be healed and so to heal others" (p. 57). Halifax (1983) succinctly called this type of shaman "the wounded healer."

Balinese communities interpreted certain diseases and deviant behaviors as calls to shamanism, which channeled "potentially disruptive actions into behavior patterns that

are perceived to be beneficial" (Stephen & Suryani, 2000). In other words, shamanic societies have mechanisms for transforming and structuring sickness, whether psychological or physiological, into behaviors that can benefit afflicted individuals and their community. Thus, the sick individual is given an important role in society instead of being stigmatized and marginalized.

Pao Saykao, a Hmong medical doctor practicing in Australia, became sick with a disease resembling some kind of autoimmune disorder, marked by fatigue, depression, weakness, and chronic pain in multiple places (Mochel et al., 2010). Medical doctors were unable to help him. A blue cap Hmong shaman was unable to heal him. Saykao was told that he needed to see a red cap (most highly ranked) Hmong shaman. After treatment by the red cap shaman, Saykao was cured. He became a shaman and now practices allopathic medicine and shamanism in the Australian Hmong immigrant community.

As shamanism is often precipitated by illness, creativity may also be preceded or accompanied by physical illness as well as beliefs, actions, or experiences interpreted as mental illness.

Elizabeth Layton suffered severe depression. After 13 years of electric shock treatments, she alleviated her symptoms through drawings exposing social fictions (Layton, 1984). "Art became more than therapy for this Wellsville, Kansas, native - it saved her life" (ElizabethLayton.com, n.d.). Through creative work, individual artists have also moved from addiction to recovery (Leonard, 1989). Unfortunately, the transformative power of art does not always save the artist's life, as evident in the number of artists ending their own lives (Andreasen, 1987).

In 1922, Prinzhorn observed the art activities of mental hospital patients from multiple vantage points. As a trained singer, skilled draftsman, and art historian, holding doctorates in both philosophy and medicine, Prinzhorn offered an integrative view of creative expression (Röske, 1995). He saw how artistic creativity provided an antidote to schizophrenic disintegration.

Atkin studied the multi-talented artist, Issa Ibrahim, who was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia after murdering his mother during a psychotic episode. Ibrahim received a life sentence in a psychiatric institution. Four days each week, for 20 years, Ibrahim created art alleviating his emotional highs and lows. Atkin wrote:

> Many people live with psychopathology such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. I believe that it is essential that we investigate the possibility that, although medications may at times be life saving, adding creativity may potentiate wellness and help transform pain and distress in uniquely valuable ways, into a more satisfying experience. (Richards et al., 2011, p. 481)

In a letter, Inez Marshall (1907-1984) described how she became an artist. While driving a grain truck in rural Kansas, Marshall fell asleep at the wheel, wrecked the truck, and broke her back in the accident.

> For a year and a half, I lay in bed unable to gain my strength. One morning, I felt an urge to immediately get to the front door. Mother and Father managed to get me into a rocking chair and then on to the front door. My gaze fell upon a small rock.... Where this came from, I know not, as there were no rocks around our place; and, I certainly wasn't thinking of 'rocks,' as I was in constant pain. I asked my father to please bring that little rock to me. He did. After handling it for a moment, I said, 'Dad, hand me your knife.' As though she anticipated my need, my mother quickly brought her 'dough board' from the kitchen, covered with a newspaper, and laid it across the arms of my chair. It seemed that someone guided my hand as I began to carve.... (Marshall, 1969, p. 3)

Shamanic illness: Discussion. Within many shamanic cultures, there are traditional ways to determine if an illness is a calling to shamanism. In some societies, only psychological illnesses can be shamanic illnesses whereas other societies understand

physiological illnesses, or a combination of both, as shamanic illness. Very few illnesses qualify as shamanic illness. An initiated shaman may recognize illness in someone else as a calling to shamanism or the sick individual might believe that a spirit identified the illness as a calling to shamanism.

Are similar experiences of illness seen in contemporary artists who are not members of a shamanic culture? Can illness indicate a calling to shamanism in contemporary artists? Here, the data, as represented in Figure 10, is not conclusive.

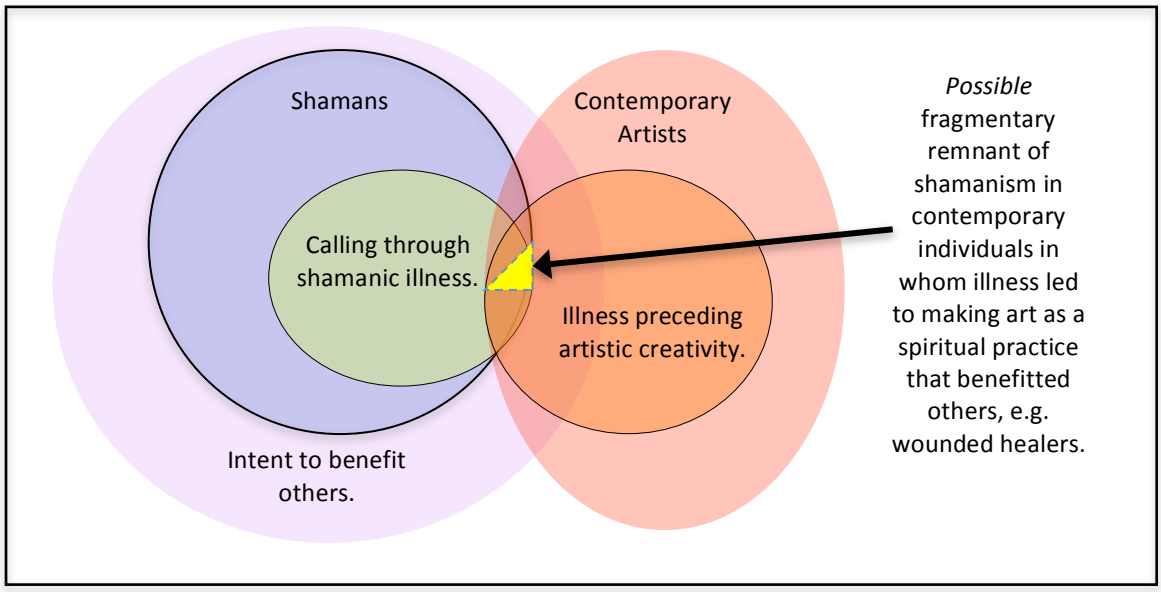


Figure 10. Some shamans are called through shamanic illness and, after illness, some contemporary artists begin making spiritual art to benefit others.

There are examples of individuals who suffered mental illness, injury in accident, or life-threatening physical illness (see Grotto of the Redemption, 2008) and either created art as part of their recovery or began making art after regaining health. But, without a shamanic context, these maladies could not be explicitly interpreted as a calling to shamanism and cannot be recognized as a form of shamanic illness.

Perhaps some of these artists eventually made work that benefitted and healed others. Some of this work seemed to be inspired by a transpersonal source, as was Inez Marshall, or the work was created as part of a spiritual practice as seen in the fantastic and elaborate *Grotto of the Redemption* (2008) built by Father Dobberstein from precious stones and gems.

Even within a traditional shamanic community, illness that leads to artistry and healing is not necessarily seen as a sign of shamanism. For example, The Tlingit storyteller described in the introduction to this dissertation, Bob Sam, certainly qualifies as a wounded healer. Learning the art of storytelling and performing internationally led to Sam's recovery from alcoholism. Although Sam was ill, then healed, and now heals others through his storytelling, he is not considered a shaman by his tribe (so far as I know). During apprenticeship, Sam learned the craft of storytelling and not the knowledge and skills used by shamans. Although Sam has some traits, experiences, and properties associated with shamanism, such as becoming a wounded healer and benefitting others through his storytelling practice, there appears to be a distinction between traditional artists and shamans at least within some shamanic communities.

When contemporary artists are called to their vocation through illness, this process is part of a larger pattern that not only contains illness but can also embrace healing, spiritual practices, and intent to benefit others. These actions resemble a few points in the constellation of interrelated constructs defining *shaman.*

Such illnesses, as a stage in becoming a wounded healer, may be examples of decontextualized fragments of shamanism from the past persisting into the present – a few more puzzle pieces that were never lost.

Traditional Transitional Picture, Denita Benyshek. Reverse-painted and collaged glass, gold leaf. Alumni Collection of Wichita State University.

Calling: Summary

Shamanic cultures believe that certain dream themes, spirit possession, visions involving spirit communication, or certain kinds of illnesses can be a means through which spirits convey a calling to shamanism. There are also other means of receiving the calling to shamanism and several means of calling may be identified in a shaman's biography.

Children and adults might dream, in the sense of imagining their future, of becoming artists. Such dreams can be interpreted as representing the will of a deity, but this interpretation is rare – except for beliefs in "God-given talents." Moreover, dreaming of a future vocation is not a sign of shamanism. A child who dreamt of becoming a basketball star was not receiving a call to shamanism.

There are rare examples of artists who supposedly experienced possession by spirits. Jim Morrison claimed that he became a shaman as the result of spirit possession. However, an experience of spirit possession is not sufficient to qualify an artist as a shaman. In addition, as discussed further below, a shamanic apprentice learns how to control guiding spirits. Morrison, in contrast, was frequently out of control.

Some, but not all, shamanic candidates experience an illness that is understood as being caused by one or more spirits. The illness may be interpreted as a calling to shamanism. Artists from traditional cultures, who also received a title indicating their role as a shaman, also might experience shamanic illness.

A subset of individuals began making art during recovery or after recovering from an illness, but without a traditional belief structure, these illnesses were not diagnosed as callings to shamanism. Even in a shamanic society, these illnesses might not be interpreted as callings to shamanism.

William Blake and Allen Ginsberg reported receiving communications from spirits through visions. These visions addressed the artistic person, the creative process, the art product, and/or provided environmental press influencing creativity. A purported vision may be interpreted as a calling to become an artist (person), convey information about innovative art techniques (creative process), or provide subject matter, content, themes, images, or even specific lines of poetry (art product). The vivid power of the vision may demand artistic expression (environmental press).

As the result of illness or visions, a subset of Western artists felt called to make art with a spiritual purpose that is also intended to benefit others. These motivations are similar to a calling to shamanism inasmuch as shamanism is, in part, a spiritual practice performed for the benefit of communities and individuals. Although the traditional shaman-artist, Kim Kum Hwa, reported experiencing many culturally recognized signs of calling to shamanism, the “entire picture” of spirit calling to shamanism is not seen in the vast majority of contemporary artists.

For most contemporary artists, the entire "picture" of shamanism is missing, most of the pieces were lost during the past centuries and millenia, and the few pieces that remain do not necessarily fit into a coherent whole.

Table 5 presents a comparison of means of calling to shamanism, including unusual conditions of birth, metaphoric birth story, physical signs, childhood signs, shamanic talent, preference for solitude, transliminality, calling by spirits, and selection by a master shaman.

Table 5

Comparison of Calling to Shamanism

Means of Calling	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Unusual conditions of birth.	Applies to a subset of shamans.	Not found	Present in some shamanic artists such as Jóska Soós.
Metaphoric birth story.	Unknown	Yes, in artists such as Joseph Beuys.	Unknown
Physical signs.	Applies to a subset of shamans.	Not found, possibly.	Unknown, no data found.
Childhood signs of future shaman (can include thoughtfulness, nightmares, odd thoughts, smoke sacred tobacco).	Applies to a subset of shamans.	Possibly Schizotypy might result in odd thoughts; thoughtfulness might result from introversion.	Present in large subset.
Shamanic Talent (healing abilities, psi, musical, etc.)	Yes	Possibly Higher rate of purported psi abilities; more musical talent in musicians. Healing talent not found but may exist in some artists.	Often
Preference for solitude.	Often	Often	Possibly, but not found.

Transliminality	Often	Often	Often
Calling by spirits to become a shaman.	Yes	No	Yes
Spirits encountered in dreams or visions.	Often	Reported by a subset of artists.	Often
Spirits encountered during possession.	Applies to a subset of shamans.	Not found, unlikely but possible in small subset.	Not found but likely for a subset of shamanic artists.
Calling to shamanism through shamanic illness.	In a minority of shamans. Most shamans do not experience shamanic illness.	No	Yes, in a subset. Examples include Kim Kum Hwa.
Chosen by master shaman	Applies to a small subset of shamans.	Not found	Not found

Prerequisites

Some shamanic societies establish prerequisites for who can become a shaman. While these prerequisites differ between different societies, the prerequisites socially designate a potential pool of future shamans.

A minimum age for shamans is set by many societies. In some societies, an individual must be past puberty (Krippner, 1991) or at least 25 or 30 years of age (Biet, 1664/2004). According to Gallagher and Ashcraft (2006), in African peoples, shamanic powers are not discovered earlier than puberty; whereas, "a Navajo man usually must be an elder, i.e. middle age" (Krippner, 1991, p. xii). Often, women must be past child bearing or child rearing before being called to shamanism.

Some shamanic societies require particular personality traits or achievement of a certain social role. The Navajo man must also be a "reliable worker, a dedicated parent, and capable community member" (Krippner, 1991, p. xii) before becoming a shaman. Similarly, only individuals with "good heart" were allowed to become shamans by the Tungus (Krippner, 1991, p. xii). Winkelman (1990, 1992) described shamans as, generally, charismatic social leaders. This is the charisma of a *psychopomp,* "a culturally validated figure who mediates between realities" (Krippner, 2004b, p. 207).

Prerequisites: Discussion

Age and maturity requirements for prospective shamans may be related to successful mastery of early adult developmental challenges, allowing an individual to commit fully to apprenticeship. A mature apprentice may be ready to enter into the developmental stage of generativity, defined by Erickson (1950) as a concern for "establishing and guiding the next generation" (p. 267) and a general desire to work for the benefit of others. The opposite of generativity, for Erikson, was stagnation which "occurs when conflicting impulses divert a person's generative intent of care and concern for others and what is left in the aftermath of one's life, and instead indulge only in their immediate self-wants, needs, and desires" (Stockman, 2008, p. 41). Beyond parenting children, generativity also encompasses active concern and caring for all members of society as well as future generations.

Requiring women to be past child rearing before becoming shamans might be due to the time and energy expenditures required for pregnancy and raising children (Pierre & Long Soldier, 1995). Within some Amazonian tribes, becoming a female shaman at middle age or menopause alleviates conflicts that might arise between rituals using

ayahuasca and how ayahuasca causes miscarriages (Dobkin de Rios, 1992). Note that only some societies apply these prerequisites to women.

Prerequisites for becoming a shaman – age, maturity, responsibility, active community participation, good parenting practices, and "good heart" – are are not required of artists. Artists can be immature, irresponsible, selfish, narcissistic, aloof from their community, poor parents, addicts, or even abusive – and still be identified as artists.

See Table 6 for a comparison of prerequisites with regards to shamans, contemporary artists, and traditional shamanic artists.

Table 6

Comparison of Prerequisites

Prerequisites	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shaman-Artists
Minimum age.	Yes, in a subset of shamanic societies.	No	Not found
Woman past childbearing age.	Yes, in a subset of shamanic societies.	No	Not found
Personality traits (such as reliability, dedicated parenting, capable community member, good heart, or charismatic).	Yes, in a subset of shamanic societies.	No	Not found, possibly
Generative adult developmental stage.	Yes, in a subset of shamanic societies.	Not required. However, in the past few decades, there are individual artists or collaborative groups of artists who create with the intent of benefitting society or the environment.	Possibly
Counterexample: Lone Hero	No	In a subset of artists, perhaps in the majority of contemporary artists, especially in the past.	Unlikely

But, the positive prerequisites for shamans might help differentiate a small subset of shamanlike artists from “lone hero” or “lone genius” (see Richards, 1996) types of artists, psychopathological artists, artists functioning at lower developmental stages, or artists engaged in deficiency creativity (see Celeste Rhodes, 1997 for a consideraton of deficiency creativity compared to self-actualized being creativity).

Figure 11 represents the relationships between prerequisites established by shamanic societies, properties associated with the generative stage of development, and characteristics of the artist Jim Morrison who lacked generativity.

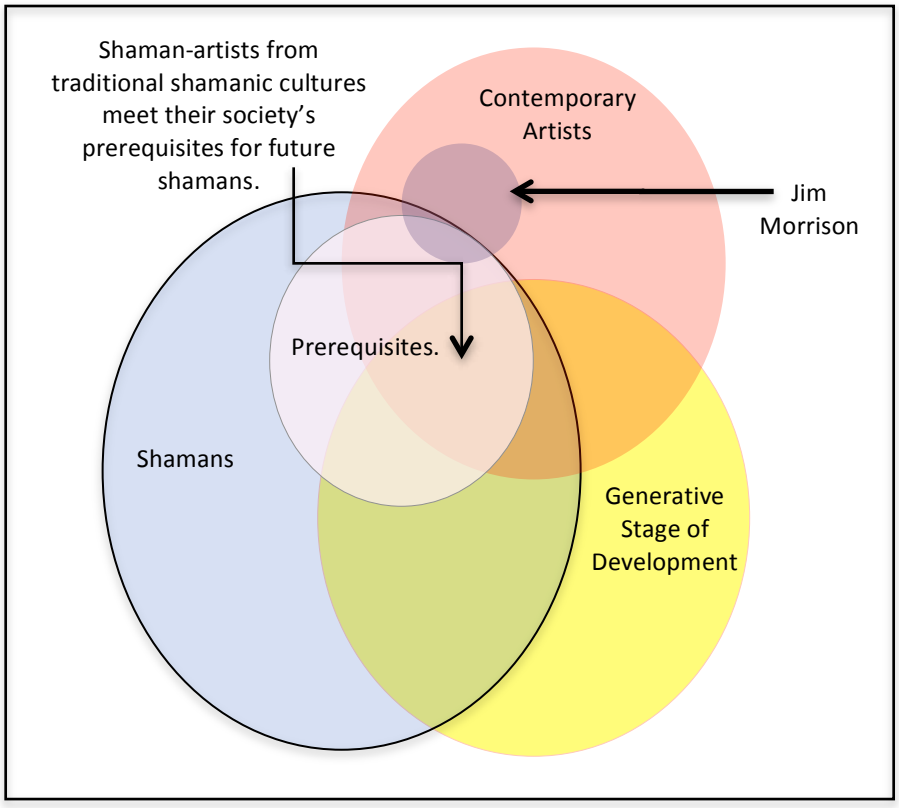


Figure 11. Socially established prerequisites for shamans, sometimes including what appears to be a generative stage of development, are seen in some, but not all, contemporary artists. Although Jim Morrison was associated with shamanism, he did not show signs of generativity (Krippner, 2009c).

Indeed, as assessed by Krippner (2009c), rock star Jim Morrison's lack of generativity, as evinced by a lack of "concern for the audiences who idolized him" (p. 5) precluded Morrison from fully qualifying as a shaman. While Morrison was influenced by shamanic beliefs and practices, he "lacked the commitment to this community and the disciplined use of altered states of consciousness that characterize traditional shamans," explained Krippner (p. 109). Unlike most writing about rock musicians as shamans, Krippner not only noted similarities between Morrison and traditional shamans, Krippner also differentiated Morrison from shamans, commenting:

> Traditional shamans often engage in wild, chaotic behavior. But it is a performance, not a life style; shamans respect the needs of their community and conserve their energy for their roles as healers, mediators, and protectors. Jim was out of control more often than he was in control. His music and his poetry reflect craft and skill, his life style does not. He chose dissipation over control, rage over compassion, death over life. His early demise indicates his lack of concern for his own well-being. (p. 115)

Because Morrison did not create with the intention of benefitting his audience, Krippner (2003b) argued that Morrison did not qualify as a shaman. One could argue, however, that Morrison's music and performances did benefit the audience despite Morrison's intentions. After Morrison's early death, "listeners told the surviving Doors members that 'Light My Fire' was playing when they first made love, or when they smoked marijuana in Vietnam to temporarily escape the horrors of war" (Krippner, p. 3).

Accepting the Gift

Accepting the gift of shamanic powers is one of the stages a candidate moves through towards explicit social designation as a shaman. But, the "shamanic gift and the so-called 'mastery' of spirits are double-edged; they are not actively sought but are rather imposed against the shaman's will" (Vitebsky, 2001, p. 57). Further, if the calling is rejected, there can be severe negative consequences. The candidate might experience

torment by spirits. Then the shunned gift becomes a curse. The candidate's family may also suffer illness, financial loss, chaos, or death. The candidate might also die as a result of rejecting the calling to shamanism. "Had I not become a shaman," shared Gilyak, "I would have died" (Rapinsky-Naxon, 1993, p. 72).

When the candidate relinquishes the past, welcomes the gift, accepts the new role of shamanism, and begins the process of transformation, then a new, empowered identity may eventually emerge. Not all who are called to shamanism, however, complete apprenticeship and initiation successfully (J. Kremer, personal communication, 2011).

Is a candidate's acceptance of the gift of shamanism similar to an artist accepting the gift of artistic talent? What is the similarity?

One similarity is how rejecting the gift of shamanism or the gift of artistic talent can result in negative consequences. John Ruskin (1891) insisted that an artist, once imagination is summoned, "must turn it to account and keep it employed, or it will turn against him in indignation" (p. 183). May Sarton, poet and novelist, wrote, "The gift turned inward, unable to be given, becomes a heavy burden, even sometimes a kind of poison" (as cited in Hyde, 1983, p. 146). The poison concocted from rejected artistic creativity can be so powerful as to cause addiction (Leonard, 1989).

Accepting the Gift: Discussion

The gift of shamanic and/or artistic talent does not necessarily result in someone becoming a shaman and/or an artist. These gifts of talent and the calling to vocation can be rejected. In both vocations, shaman and artist, there appear to be negative consequences for rejecting the gift. If the calling to either vocation is accepted, and talents begin to be actualized, transformation into the new role also begins.

Like Gilyak, I can truthfully state, “Had I not become an artist, I would have died.” If not physically via suicide, then through the loss and slow death of my soul inasmuch as making art continually revitalizes my soul and renews my connection with life. S. Krippner (personal communication, 2006) recalled hearing “variations of this theme by both artists and shamans.”

Regarding shamanism, are there properties or processes that are unique to a calling to shamanism and are these properties or processes the same as what contemporary artists, or a subset of these artists, experience in some form of calling? In the data considered, there was inadequate information to answer these questions.

While there are reports of the dangers that result from rejecting a calling to shamanism, and there are also comments from artists about the negative consequences of rejecting the gift of artistic talent, we do not have enough data to know to what extent these processes are the same. When an individual rejects artistic talent, does that individual’s family suffer negative consequences similar to what a shamanic candidate’s family suffers if the calling to shamanism is denied? Answering this question is another project for future researchers.

Table 7 presents comparisons between shamans, contemporary artists, and traditional shamanic artists with regards to accepting a call to shamanism.

Table 7

Comparison of Accepting a Call to Shamanism

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Gift not active sought.	Gift of shamanic talent usually not actively sought.	Gift of artistic talent not actively sought. Unknown if gift of shamanism is actively sought by artists.	Gift of shamanic and artistic talents are usually not actively sought.
If gift rejected, negative consequences.	Yes	Appears to be yes, at least for a subset of artists, with regards to artistic talent. Unknown if negative consequences result when artists reject a call to shamanism.	Probably but not found in shamanic artists considered inasmuch as these artists had all accepted the call to shamanism. In traditional societies, negative consequences are believed to befall all who reject shamanism, including artists.
If gift is welcomed, then transformation begins.	Yes	Yes, with regards to artistic talent. Probably, with regards to shamanism or shamanlike callings and gifts; but, more research is required for confirmation.	Yes

Creativity studies generally considers individuals who are actualizing creativity in some way, to whatever extent, and we know little about people who reject their talent and do not actualize their creative potential. Nor do we know how this rejection affects the person's family. Moreover, many people experience a calling – to teach, minister, lead, or heal. Do these people also experience negative consequences if they reject their calling? Or do their life paths simply head in a different direction?

At this time, we do not know if the process of rejecting or accepting the call to shamanism is similar to how individuals are called to become artists or similar to how individuals are called to become artists with shamanic characteristics.

Training and Apprenticeship

After accepting the call to shamanism, an individual undergoes training that can include a formal apprenticeship. Instruction might be received from a master shaman and/or be perceived as coming from spirits that may be encountered in dreams or nature. These ways of receiving instruction are understood and sanctioned by each apprentice's community.

Traditions, that vary from culture to culture, determine what skills and knowledge will be taught to an apprentice. However, instructional content is not limited to what is already known and is not only a repetition of traditions. Original content, perhaps a new song, can also be given to an apprentice through a dream or via other kinds of contact with purported spirits.

Master Shamans

Methods and content of instruction for shamanic apprentices is established and maintained by traditions. These traditions serve as a means of socially designating a shamanic apprentice.

The apprentice might be trained by a master shaman (Shirokogoroff, 1935/2004), perhaps by living in an "ancient's home" (Biet, 1664/2004, p. 16), undergoing years of training (Krippner, 1991) that may last up to 10 years (Biet, 1664/2004), or with the Ammassalik of Greenland, over a decade (Krippner, 1991). Note, 10 years of training, education, apprenticeship, and mentorship is often required to achieve the level of

expertise required for middle C or pro-c creativity (Mann & Chan, 2011; Morelock & Feldman, 1999), a subset of everyday creativity. To support the best development of talent and skill, apprentices often associate themselves with the most highly regarded shaman in their area (Walters, 2003).

A small subset of contemporary shamanic artists were trained by master shamans and, often, a combination of traditional healers, spirits, dreams, and visions – as seen in the story of the Peruvian mestizo artist Pablo César Amaringo (1943-2009).

Pablo César Amaringo. After a long illness diagnosed as heart disease, when he occasionally coughed up blood, Amaringo was cured by his shaman-father through a simple ritual. His father sang a powerful *icaro* (spiritual song/prayer) over a psychedelic ayahuasca drink. The entheogen gave Amaringo a healing dream and he recovered (Luna & Amaringo, 1999). Later, when Amaringo suffered from neck pain, fever, and hallucinations, his brother suspected that Amaringo had been attacked through witchcraft.

Although Amaringo remained skeptical of the powers of vegetalistas, shamans who specialized in the use of ayahuasca, his brother persuaded him to see a shaman. A simple sucking extraction ritual cured Amaringo (Luna & Amaringo, 1999). Amaringo also assisted a *cuyandera* (also spelled *cuandera* or *curandera*, a folk healer or shaman) with a shamanic healing of his sister, who was believed to be dying but was cured, and experienced another rich vision from ayahuasca provided by the cuyandera (Luna & Amaringo).

Amaringo's life was changing. He felt himself turning into a bat. He knew where a stranger was sick and in pain. He experienced spirits instructing him in dreams. Suddenly, without study, he knew many icaros. He undertook study with other shamans,

including the cuyandera, to learn more skills. Then, Amaringo and the cuyandera both experienced her spirit assistants leaving her to assist Amaringo (Luna & Amaringo, 1999).

For two years, Amaringo served as a healer, curing illnesses, resolving legal conflicts, mending troubled love relationships, and becoming famous. Then, other shamans began fighting him through sorcery and witchcraft. He was magically attacked by the cuyandera who earlier trained him. A vegetalista told Amaringo that Amaringo must kill the cuyandera with his own shamanic powers. Amaringo refused and the helping spirits abandoned him to return to the cuyandera (Luna & Amaringo, 1999).

Amaringo cursed the spirits for not protecting him, for leaving him. He gave up healing, suffered nightmares for a year, and endured poverty. Nonetheless, he continued teaching himself how to draw and paint. Eventually, he based the subject matter of his paintings on memories of *ayahuasca* visions. Amaringo began teaching his own techniques for painting and remembering hallucinogen evoked imagery (Luna & Amaringo, 1999).

Through collaboration with an anthropologist, Luis Eduardo Luna, and the anthropologist's wife, Sirpa Rasanen, Amaringo started the *Usko-Ayar* (Quecha for "Spiritual Prince") Amazonian School of Painting devoted to preserving Amazonian flora, fauna, and indigenous cultures (One World Magazine, 1996). No longer working ostensibly as a shaman to heal and benefit others, Amaringo's work as an artist and teacher continued to heal and serve.

Spirit Guides and Teachers

"Spirit guides" (Krippner, 1991, p. xiii) are also believed to offer instruction to a shamanic apprentice. After experiencing a lesson taught by spirits, an apprentice may rely on experienced shamans for help mastering what the tutelary spirit or deity taught (D. Walter, 2003).

As an elder, the Flathead Lake Kutenai shaman, Lasso Stasso, shared the tale of his c. 1900 vision quest:

> When I was about age 13, I went up on top of Chief Rock, near Dayton.... Up there is a little circle of stones where we would lay. All kinds of spirits dwell up there, like birds, animals, rocks, everything. Coyote spoke to me up there one night.... He also gave me a son. Deer gave me the power to hunt successfully, while fawn still later gave me gambling power.... Fawn came when I was 14 or 15. They all gave me good songs to use.... It is the song that does it. The power is in the song. (Malouf & White, 1952, p. 104)

After receiving a song, to "to commemorate a successful vision, the supplicant would finger-paint pictographs of the guardian spirit or other dream subjects at the site" (Keyser, 1992, p. 47).

Hilma af Klint. Do contemporary artists also report receiving instruction from spirits? Yes, a subset of contemporary artists told of being taught by spirits or deities, including the pioneering artist, medium, and spiritist Hilma af Klint (1862-1944) who invented abstract painting before Kandinsky, made over 1,000 works of art, many in large scale, and kept detailed diaries for 50 years. Klint's work was hidden while she created and also from the public after her death, as mandated in her will, because she felt people were not yet ready for her work (Sandqvist, 2010).

Klint believed she received inspiration from a spirit named Ananda who told her to paint on the astral plane. The art historian Gertrud Sandqvist (2010) stated, "Hilma af

Klint really believed that she was guided by spirits and without that belief, she would have never made anything like this. I am completely convinced of this."

Eventually, she decided to show her work to Rudolph Steiner, the founder of Anthroposophy, who criticized her work harshly, told her that her interpretations were wrong, and that she was not allowed to contact spirits directly. The visit was crushing and Klint did not paint again for four years (Sandqvist, 2010). Eventually, after four years of silence, spirits told Klint she was mature enough "to see the images on her own" and to move her own hand without spirit guidance (Sandqvist).

I never wanted

color
to be color.

I never wanted

texture to be texture,

or
images
to become
shapes.

I wanted them all

to fuse together into

A LIVING SPIRIT.

Poem/art constructed by researcher from the words of Clifford Still, American Abstract Expressionist (Demetrion, 2001, p. 13)

The art spirit. Starting during the *fin de siècle*, in Europe and the United States, the art spirit was seen as an invisible force of inspiration indwelling in each artist. From 1880 to 1920, scores, perhaps hundreds, of authors and journalists wrote of the artist's spirit (e.g. Architectural Record, 1892; Drage, 1896; Henri, 1923; Kandinsky, 1916/1994; The Atlantic Monthly, 1863). In the sense used by Immanuel Kant (1790/1928), the art spirit animates a work of art "and makes the thing itself speak, as it were, by mime" (p. 193).

Artwork was perceived as inspirited, as a vehicle or home for an individual artist's personal spirit or, more broadly, *the* artist's spirit, a supernatural entity inspiring all artists. In a somewhat animistic sense, the art spirit was also believed to animate works of art through which the art spirit communicated with the audience.

Zeitgeist. *Zeitgeist,* another kind of spirit that influenced artists, refers to the underlying spirit of a time, age, era, or society during any certain time period, consisted of the "sum of the thoughts, attitudes, strivings, drives, and life-forces, expressing themselves within any causes and effects in a definite course of events" (Herder, 1877-1913, p. 45).

Zeigeist consisted of a synthesized essence of culture, politics, religion, historical events, philosophy, ethics, and felt experiences, influencing the development of human endeavors and pulling the puppet strings of history. Zeitgeist also existed as a metaphoric and transcendental reality that did not resemble anthropomorphized spirits or animal spirits but, instead, was invisible and ubiquitous.

Kandinsky was especially interested in how the hand of Zeitgeist directed the hands of artists. Kandinsky stated his beliefs in writing:

> The abstract spirit first takes possession of the individual human spirit and later rules an ever increasing number of men. In that moment individual artists succumb to the Zeitgeist, which drives them to make use of individual forms related one to another which thus likewise possess a certain external similarity. (Selz, 1957, p. 22)

Descriptions of relationships with different kinds of spirits pervade Kandinsky's writings. For Kandinsky, freedom was found in direct relationship with spirit:

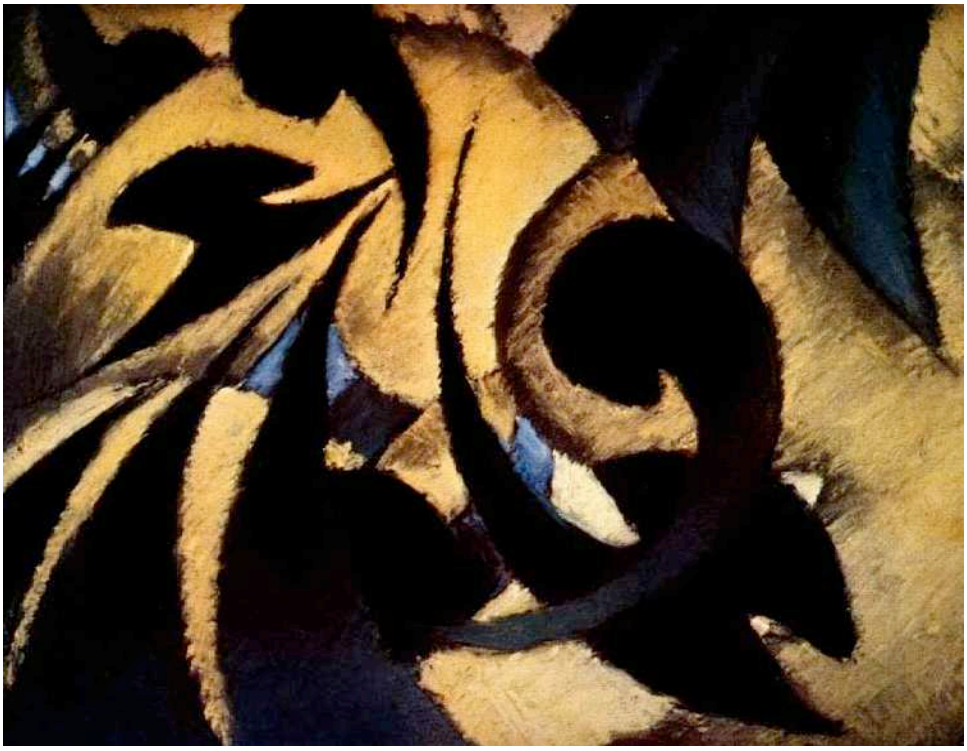
> The free individual not only rises upward; he also lets himself sink to the depths. Wherever he goes, he observes with wide-open eyes and listens intently, seeking life everywhere and everywhere listening to the voice of the living spirit which is hidden from the superficial; this is the spirit that he wants to discern. It is in the spirit where life can be recognized… (Kandinsky, 1916/1982, p. 410)

Spirit or deity in nature. During the 19th century, deity was experienced through the American wilderness. The Christian God and nature became equated (Novak, 2007). Instead of believing that nature was animated by numerous spirits, nature was believed to be inspirited by a single deity. The wilderness, interpreted as a kind of religious text through which sacred knowledge was taught, represented the Christian paradise or Eden. From this perspective, Ralph Waldo Emerson's (1849) book, *Nature,* described nature as inspirited by the Christian God, *"*The noblest ministry of nature is to stand as the apparition of God. It is the organ through which the universal spirit speaks to the individual..." (p. 60).

Several European American artists, namely Arthur Dove (Turner, 2006), Georgia O'Keeffe (Udall, 2000), and Charles Burchfield (Cohen, 2001), painted animated landscapes where whirling wind, vibrating trees, swirling stars, and enhaloed leaves are dynamic. Direct contact with nature directly taught these artists that nature is alive and powerful and this power is conveyed through the shapes, color, line quality, value range, and brushwork of their paintings.

View in the White Mountains, Thomas Cole, c. 1827.

Lightning and Thunder at Night, Charles Burchfield, 1920.



Nature Symbolized, Arthur Dove, 1911.

Instruction through dreams. Another source of instruction for shamanic apprentices occurs during dreams. In a consideration of creativity and dreams, Krippner (1999) described a few of the multiple meanings and purposes of dreams in traditional societies.

> Even the word dream is a social artifact, because dreams are viewed differently from culture to culture. What Westerners refer to as dreams and visions are referred to by a single word among many North American Indian tribes. The Australian aboriginal terms Dreamtime and the Dreaming have very different meanings than the same terms have in Western societies. For the purposes of this entry, dreams are series of images, reported in narrative form, that occur during sleep.... dreams have been linked with what is now called creativity, that is, with products and processes that are considered new, novel, and useful by individuals or by social groups. Because dreaming, at least in part, is a cognitive activity, its images and scenarios can serve as symbols and metaphors for unresolved life issues as well as their possible solutions. (p. 598)

New songs, rituals, insights, and knowledge could be received by a shaman through dreams.

Further discussing traditional interpretations of dreams, Krippner (1999) also wrote:

> Among pre-Columbian Native American dream traditions, some saw dreams as having the same meaning for every member of the tribe, whereas others felt that dreams conveyed meanings personal to the dreamer; some believed that dreams served problem-solving functions, whereas others felt that they forecast the future; some believed that dreams dictated actions that needed to be taken in daily life, whereas others believed that dream events took place in the spirit world. In some tribes, dream messages were direct and undisguised, whereas for others they required interpretation. However, few North American tribal groups neglected dreams; they were seen as sources of knowledge, power, inspiration, and what today would be called creativity. (p. 600)

There are many traditional explanations for knowledge and communications channeled through dreams. Do artists learn from purported spirits that supposedly communicate during dreams?

In a poem entitled "The Dream," English poet Lord Byron (Griswold, 1844) wrote:

> THE DREAM
>
> OUR LIFE is twofold: sleep hath its own world,
> A boundary between the things misnamed
> Death and existence; sleep hath its own world,
> And a wide realm of wild reality,
> And dreams in their development have breath,
> They leave a weight upon our waking thoughts,
> They do divide our being; they become
> A portion of ourselves as of our time,
> And look like heralds of eternity:
> They pass like spirits of the past – they speak
> Like sybils of the future; they have power.... (p. 221)

In lines 10 and 11, Byron used similes, dreams were *like* spirits and *like* sybils. Then a transformation occurs. Later, in the same poem, the similes are dropped and the

spirit becomes real. Each time the dream switched characters and scenes, Byron wrote: "A change came o'er *the spirit of my dream* [emphasis added]...." (Griswold, 1844, p. 221). Byron's dream was inspirited. But, these spirits did not inhabit a shamanic cosmology.

Teachers: Discussion. After accepting a call to shamanism, apprentices learn their craft from master shamans and/or spirits. One contemporary artist who also belonged to a traditional shamanic society received shamanic training as well as training in a form of art. Trained by master practitioners, this artist also served as a shaman for his community.

Shamanic societies believe that spirits can provide instruction and guidance to apprentices through visions and dreams. These spirits often take anthropomorphic or zoomorphic forms. Contemporary artists who are members of shamanic cultures experience spirits in a way that "fits" within a culturally specific shamanic cosmology.

A subset of contemporary artists also reported learning or being inspired by guiding spirits, the art spirit, *Zeitgeist,* or a deity in the form of wilderness. These kinds of spirits were not part of a shamanic cosmology, often reflected the period's interest in the occult, and might represent a surviving fragment of shamanism. The art spirit, or an artist's individual spirit, was believed to move into and enliven a work of art so that the artwork could be expressive and communicate to the audience. This belief is somewhat similar to the Bamana or Mande people's belief in *nyama,* a ubiquitous power that could be harnessed and placed within an object crafted by a blacksmith, such as a mask or ritual staff (McNaughton, 1988).

Except for rare situations, such as the Arts and Consciousness Program at John F. Kennedy University in San Francisco emphasizing the spiritual and psychosocial aspects of art (John F. Kennedy University, 2011) or the Usko Ayar School of Visionary Art in Peru started by Pablo Amaringo, formal art educational environments do not develop spiritual art practices. The vast majority of artists are not taught how to contact spirits unless they participate in a religion that communicates with deities or spirits. Shamans did not train most artists.

Skills

There are many specific skills taught to shamanic apprentices that are not taught to contemporary artists, including how to: diagnose illnesses (Krippner, 1991; Lafitau, 1724/2004), find stolen objects, bring luck, cast spells and curses, propitiate gods (Kim & Skoggard, 1998), rid the village of malevolent spirits (Jonaitis, 1986), communicate with the dead, and interpret dreams (Krippner, 1991). The skill of prophesy is learned to predict weather (Krippner), foresee success or defeat in war (Lafitau, 1724/2004), and, in general, foretell the future (Jonaitis, 1986; Lafitau).

Some of the skills that are taught to shamans are similar to skills learned by subsets of contemporary artists who are performers such as chanting, making bird calls (Balzer, 1996), telling stories (Krippner, 1991, p. xiii), and using ventriloquism (Jochelson, 1908/2004; van Gennep, 1903/2004). Somewhat similar to how a musician is trained, the Chukchee apprentice practiced drumming several times a day to develop the physical strength necessary for drumming nonstop for hours (van Gennep), even all night. Songs, legends, myths, and dances might also be learned. Many apprentices learned to

conduct rituals (Krippner, 1991) that have a theatrical component in the presentation as well as a spiritual purpose.

Skills: Discussion. Some shamanic skills seem to be means of developing and directing transliminal traits. As noted earlier, an individual who is high in transliminality has thinner boundaries, is extra sensitive, is hypothesized to receive more psychological material into consciousness (Thalbourne & Houran, 2000), and is more likely to score high in tests of their paranormal abilities (Storm & Thalbourne, 1998-1999). Working together, these qualities can result in more insight into others and a deeper psychological understanding of people. Indeed, some shamanic apprentices are taught how to expose "secret desires of the soul" (Lafitau, 1724/2004).

From a Western, psychological perspective, transliminal traits are "inside" a person, residing within someone's personality so to speak; whereas, in Bali, "the key to becoming a balian is accessing a special intuitive mode of thought wherein visions and voices experienced as existing outside the self bring special knowledge and powers" (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 31).

Acquiring and Controlling Powers

Developing the skills and "inner resources necessary to avoid being overwhelmed by the powers… [the shaman] had to confront" (Dixon, 1908/2004) was the most important lesson of all. Shamanic apprentices are trained to develop the ability to control powers and spirits. Dixon (1908/2004) explained that during training, the apprentice might begin obtaining power from animal spirits, local spirits, spirits of natural phenomena, ghosts of the dead, or deities.

The most common forms of power come from guardian spirits that are, most often, in the form of animals. The second most common form of power was found through local, disembodied, natural phenomena spirits that were often in human form. The most rare source, used "as a last resort" (Dixon, 1908/2004, p. 67) by the Tlingit, was from ghosts of the dead. To acquire power, the apprentice might sleep on a grave or bite the finger off a corpse. Also rare is the receipt of shamanic power directly from a deity. The Mohave tribe, natives of southern Arizona and California, believed their shamans received power from a deity, during a mythic age, that is lived in prior to birth into human form.

American Modernist painter Clifford Still (1904-1980) understood the necessity of controlling his own creative powers. In a letter, Still wrote:

> The forces I generate and externalize can be used to many ends. My concern is that they be not so turned against me that I cease to be able to extend their intensity and clarity, or that I be made a victim of the tensions and complexes that lash or impale so many others. (as cited in Wood, 2004, p. 170)

Acquiring and controlling powers: Discussion. Acquiring spirit helpers and learning how to control spirits is an important part of shamanic training.

Advanced artistic skills and masterful facility with creative processes provided artists with means of structuring raw, emotionally powerful content that might derive from personal experience or be wrought from the environmental press of the *Zeitgeist*. While a traumatic experience may be overwhelming and could result in dissociation, fragmentation, or trouble functioning, making art transforms memory and emotion into an externalized form that can be related to. Creativity reorganizes the experience so that parts are related through compositional strategies into a unified whole, gaining understanding and power over the original experience.

I am reminded of the Shostakovich symphony composed about, and during, the Siege of Leningrad – environmental press in a tragic form of bombing, starvation, mass graves, and terrible cold. The first performance of the symphony also occurred during the World War II siege. That performance was broadcast through speakers into the war torn and ravaged city, providing the citizenry with opportunities to experience their situation in a way that was controlled and powerful, poignantly expressing grief, courage, and determination to survive.

Knowing how to feel, remember, process, and transform experience can be life saving for artists. Such art provides closure for artists, which is then opened again by the audience.

Training and Apprenticeship: Summary

Although most contemporary artists and all shamans undergo training, there are few similarities in how both groups are trained. Master shamans train many shamanic candidates, and all candidates appeared to receive some kind of instruction and/or powers from spirits inhabiting a shamanic cosmology. These spirits are most often encountered during dreams or visions. Contemporary artists who were also members of traditional shamanic cultures usually underwent formal apprenticeship with a master and also believed they received instruction from spirits.

Contemporary artists experienced spirits during dreams, visions, and occult activities. Many artists, and members of their audiences, also believed in the existence of the art spirit, in the *Zeitgeist,* and/or in wilderness as a manifestation of the Christian God. Artists also experienced the power of nature directly. These spirits are not parts of any shamanic cosmology; however, the belief in spirits may be another surviving

fragment of shamanism. Figure 12 represents the somewhat overlapping, slightly similar, and also differing spirit beliefs of contemporary artists and shamans.

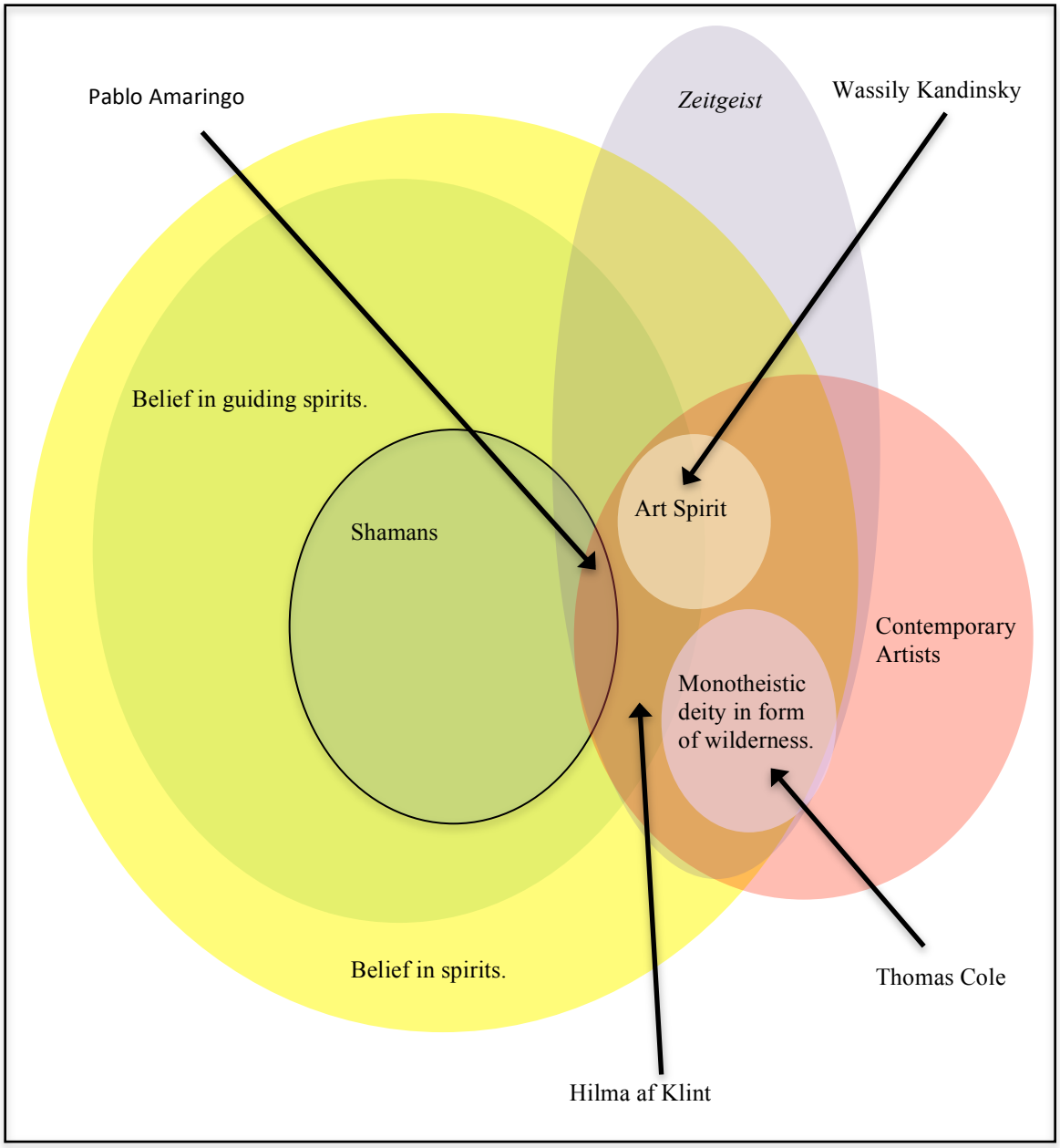


Figure 12. Shamans believe in spirits that may offer guidance, while certain contemporary artists believed in spirits that might be conceived as *Zeitgeist*, the art spirit, or as a monotheistic deity experienced through wilderness.

Shamanic apprentices learned skills required for their future practice, some of which involved forms of shamanic arts. Their education also included cultural content such as sagas, songs, rituals, etc. In a many ways, shamans served as the libraries of their societies.

While contemporary artists learn skills required for their chosen medium of expression, with a subset undergoing training in several media, artists are not taught many skills practiced by traditional shamans such as prophesy, diagnosing and treating illnesses, and finding lost or stolen objects, etc.

There are contemporary artists who independently studied ritual techniques, mythology, prehistoric art, tribal art, and other subjects related to shamanism including neoshamanism – often through books, occasionally in seminars or workshops – and then incorporated this knowledge into their art practice.

All shamans and many, but not all, contemporary artists learn to harness their powers and talents, which protects these creative individuals from being overwhelmed, losing control, and suffering harm.

In a traditional society, an individual who cannot acquire and control power cannot become, or remain, a shaman. This is not true of all artists because a subset of contemporary artists dissipate their talents or damage their creative productivity through behaviors such as a lack of discipline, an avoidance of solitude, believing negative criticism, becoming addicted, or, tragically, suicide (see Leonard, 1989).

A comparison between shamans, contemporary artists, and shamanic artists, including training, teachers, and role of spirits, is presented in Table 8. Then, Table 9 compares skills learned by shamans, contemporary artists, and shamanic artists.

Table 8

Comparison of Training and Apprenticeship

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Formal apprenticeship in shamanism.	Often	Often trained in art, less frequently undertake autodidact studies of ritual, myth, or shamanism, often through books.	Yes, for some but not all.
Teachers:			
Master Shaman	Usually	Not found	Usually
Experience of Spirits	Yes, as guides & teachers who are part of a shamanic cosmology, often through visions or dreams.	Yes, in a small subset. May act as guides.	Yes, as guides & teachers who are part of a shamanic cosmology, often through visions or dreams.
	Part of shamanic cosmology.	Most frequently not part of shamanic cosmology.	Part of shamanic cosmology.
	Often through visions or dreams.	Might be experienced through visions or dreams.	Often through visions or dreams.
	Occult practices used by some shamans.	Occult practices.	
		Zeitgeist.	
	Animistic nature.	Deity manifest in nature. Power of nature. Partial display of animism might be the presence of the art spirit in an artwork.	Animistic nature.
Art related skills (songs, dances, chanting, playing instrument, theatrical components of rituals, etc.).	Usually taught skills in a variety of media.	Often focus on 1 medium although often have talents in multiple mediums.	Usually taught skills in a variety of media.
	Arts as integral part of shamanic practice.	Arts are not taught as part of shamanic practices. A subset of artists pursue autodidact studies of subjects associated with shamanism such as ritual or myth.	Arts as integral part of shamanic practice.

Table 9

Comparison of Skills Learned

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Art related skills (songs, dances, chanting, playing instrument, theatrical components of rituals, etc.).	Usually taught skills in a variety of media.	Often focus on one medium although often have talents in multiple mediums.	Usually taught skills in a variety of media but may specialize in one medium.
	Arts as integral part of shamanic practice.	Arts are not taught as part of shamanic practices. A subset of artists pursue autodidact studies of subjects associated with shamanism (ritual, myth, etc.).	Arts as integral part of shamanic practice.
Non-art related skills (diagnosis, prophecy, find lost or stolen objects, bring luck, cast spells, communicate with dead, predict weather, find game, etc.).	Some, not all, skills are learned.	No	Some, not all, skills are learned.
Taught specific skills used in shamanic practice.	Yes	Rarely, through methods outside formal art education.	Yes

Initiation

After completing training, during initiation, the apprentice becomes a ritual participant. Initiation can involve a cultural-specific, formalized, public ritual. Initiation can also occur informally, even somewhat spontaneously, but is still interpreted with meaning structures from a shamanic cosmology.

The ingestion of psychotropic plants or other means of altering consciousness might evoke visions of journeys to other realms. There, the participant might meet spirit

animals that become lifelong assistants. Ripinsky-Naxon (1993) noted numerous transcultural analogies in the initiation of neophyte shamans. From physical ordeals, such as isolation, deprivation, exhaustion, even torture, the apprentice dies metaphorically. If initiation is successful, then a metaphoric rebirth occurs, and a new shaman is born. The initiate is then ready to begin practicing shamanism. The act of seeing also plays an important role.

Seeing

An Inuit candidate for shamanism, seeking apprenticeship to a shaman, would state, "I come to you because *I desire to see*" (Vitebsky, 2001, p. 19). Many shamans develop a "second or inner sight" that leads to wisdom. During initiation, the participant's eyes might be ritually and metaphorically gouged out and then replaced by different eyes that can see other realms.

Artists also learn to see. For Matisse, seeing was the initial step in the creative process:

> Thus, for the artist creation begins with vision. To see is itself a creative operation, requiring an effort. Everything that we see in our daily life is more or less distorted by acquired habits…. The effort needed to see things without distortion takes something very like courage; and this courage is essential to the artist, who has to look at everything as though he saw it for the first time. (Matisse as cited in Flam, 1994, p. 148)

The process of seeing allows the artist to access an experience of reality that is not available to most nonartists. An important part of an artist's creative process is the desire to see. As will be demonstrated in the chapter on how art benefits society, members of the art audience seek out art experiences because they, too, desire to see.

Spontaneous Initiation

After initiation, the ability to see is transformed. Although many kinds of initiation involve physical trials, pain, and suffering, the transformation into shaman can also occur during an informal, ecstatic experience of joy-filled singing.

Aua, a member of the northern Canadian Inuit community, recounted how he became a shaman:

> Then I sought solitude, and here I soon became very melancholy. I would sometimes fall to weeping and feel unhappy without knowing why. Then for no reason, all would suddenly be changed, and I felt a great, inexplicable joy, a joy so powerful that could not restrain it, but had to break into song, a mighty song, with only room for one word: joy, joy! And I had to use the full strength of my voice. And then in the midst of such a fit of mysterious and overwhelming delight I became a shaman, not knowing myself how it came about. But I was a shaman. I could see and hear in a totally different way. (Rasmussen, 1929)

Dismemberment and Disintegration

During initiation, some participants experience seeing their bodies cut apart. The severed head might observe dismemberment, watch flesh scraped from bones, contemplate boiling body parts, keenly aware of the entire terrifying process, and often experiencing excruciating physical pain.

In a traditional shamanic society, dismemberment is experienced as real partly because such societies do not differentiate experiences between what the West thinks of as consensual reality and fantasy, vision, dream, or imagination. In many shamanic societies, these experiences are all equally real (see Luna & Amaringo, 1999). In this regard, participants undergoing initiation do not suspend disbelief but, instead, experience absolute belief. What they believe they are seeing is what they are experiencing fully.

Lucid, profound seeing is an encounter, passionate, intense, confrontational, and a catalyst triggering change. Rollo May (1975) perceived encounter as a threat to identity, when "the world is not as we experienced it before, and since self and world are always correlated, *we* are no longer what we were before" (p. 107). For those who see, identity is in a constant state of construction.

May's concept of encounter and the subsequent identity transformation may occur during shamanic initiation. While the experience of dismemberment can be a type of somatic hallucination (Barker, 1997), dismemberment can also be a metaphor for the fragmentation of self that results from genuine encounter. May (1975) believed encounter inevitably lead to anxiety, "The anxiety we feel is temporary rootlessness, disorientation; it is the anxiety of nothingness" (p. 107).

To what extent is shamanic initiation the same process as creative disintegration and reintegration?

When personality disintegrates, there is a

> fragmentation of a person's self-concept and social behavior to such an extent that the person no longer presents a unified, predictable set of beliefs, attitudes, traits, and behavioral responses. The most extreme examples of disintegrated, disorganized personality are found in the schizophrenias. (Corsini, 2002a, p. 285)

In psychiatry, disorganization is "an inability to integrate thought processes, emotions, and volition in meeting the demands of life" (Corsini, 2002b, p. 286).

Trial by Fire

In some societies, the apprentice's identity reconstruction involves a trial by fire. To publically display mastery of powers, the apprentice might walk over coals or, to demonstrate the presence of inner fire, be subjected to extreme cold (C. Pratt, 2007).

Regarding metaphoric trials by fire experienced by artists, Jamison (1993) pondered the burning fire that destroys and creates during episodes of bipolar disorder:

> There is agreement that artistic creativity and inspiration involve, indeed require, a dipping into prerational or irrational sources while maintaining ongoing contact with reality…. The degree to which individuals can, or desire to, "summon up the depths" is among the more fascinating individual differences. Many highly creative and accomplished writers, composers, and artists function essentially within the rational world, without losing access to their psychic 'underground.' …. The integration of these deeper, truly irrational sources with more logical processes can be a torturous task, but, if successful, the resulting work often bears a unique stamp, a 'touch of fire'…. (p. 104)

While the creator's task is not necessarily torturous and may instead be joyful, even ecstatic, the creative process does widely travel through the upper and lower realms of shamanlike worlds, moved by the earthquakes of emotion, dipping into irrational wells, and excavating the strata of memories, all mined, commingled, melted, refined, and remembered anew in the heat of creativity.

Emily Dickinson (1924) knew well this process, writing a poem that described a soul in "white heat," that is refined by the fire of an inner forge until the soul is transformed into light that "repudiates the forge," no longer requiring refinement.

Dostoevsky offered another alchemical image, "Without suffering, Happiness cannot be understood. The ideal passes though suffering like gold through fire" (Leonard, 1989, p. 258).

Born of Sea Fire, Denita Benyshek and Corwin Fergus, drawing, painting, photography, collage.

Remembering

After suffering, the initiate's body is remembered, but often in some changed manner, following which a ritual or metaphoric birth takes place.

Consider the word "remembering": to "return to an original shape or form after being deformed or altered" (American Heritage Dictionary, 2000). Yet, remembering also carries another dimension of meaning. *Memor,* to be mindful, is the Latin root. Moore (2000) perceived remembering as inviting a "cutoff piece of life" back, then "a gaping sore may be sutured by the simple threads of memory" (p. 21). Achieving wholeness, which is an etymological root for the word *health*, requires remembering individual, cultural, and collective memories.

According to the scholar Marcel Detienne (1996) the Greek concept of truth meant unforgetting. Inspired by Detienne's work, Thomas Moore (2003) wrote:

> This truth is sung by poets, is inseparable from justice, and is served by a kind of deception. Lethe is the river of forgetfulness that everyone must cross to reach the Underworld. Therefore, a-lethe-ia, no Lethe, is unforgetting. By crossing the river and forgetting, you can be rinsed of all ideas and concerns of this world and then remember the mysterious truths of the otherworld. Almost like a shaman, the real artist, the master of truth, makes this journey and recalls the deep and hidden nature of things, helping to give order to the world and meaning to our lives. Detienne says that truth is always edged with forgetfulness and lined with illusion. In fact, the poet deceives us in a positive way with the charm of musical language and the richness of imagery, but in that artful deception we come closer to the design of things, to the knowledge that really matters, than if we try to be objective and factual. (p. 8)

Thus, remembering – as in the sense of reuniting dismembered parts of a body – reconstructs the shaman's physical body, while also reconfiguring experience, seeing, and understanding in a new form. Similarly, through dismembering and remembering, disintegration and reintegration, artists may function metaphorically like contemporary shamans.

The artistic process of remembering and reintegration also involves the art audience. Speaking of the work of the Greek poet, George Seferis (1900-1971), McLuhan (1994) commented:

> Memory functions as a 'rich injunction' and expresses itself organically in the natural forms of George Seferis' ancestral universe. There, it is wholly alive, teeming with soul and spirit and ready to provide nourishment and completion for the seeking human spirit. (p. 263)

Creative acts, performed by artists and shamans, can transform suffering into wisdom. Kenny (2010a) poetically described this shared alchemical process:

> Within the 'heart, the Hall of Consciousness,' fire creates a 'burning-ground' that 'burns' up and destroys the ego. In another sense, at the same time, the fire becomes the fire of compassion – the fire of 'suffering with' others…. Through this process, the carefully created form of ego, preserved for so long, is transcended and destroyed.

> Simultaneously, enlightenment (the arising of light from the introduction of the fire into the dark of ignorance) is 'created.' The true self is awakened. In this sense, individuals, in allowing themselves to be transformed and to enter the Unitive stage, experience the full process of cosmic creation – birth, death, and rebirth. (pp. 199-200)

Stepping Over Time, Sowing Shallow Grave, Denita Benyshek

In this realm, "the creative ground of being," an individual transcends ego and experiences "ego death" and "rebirth," "a process that is at the heart of creativity itself" (Kenny, 2010a, p. 199). Beyond disintegration and reintegration, Kenny explained how metaphoric trial by fire results in spiritual awakening and transformation.

Initiation: Discussion

Although May (1975) believed that genuine encounter always caused anxiety and a sense of being threatened, my personal experience with the process of seeing, encounter, disintegration, and reintegration has been joyous.

At age 28, the Ucross Foundation, located in the foothills of Wyoming, blessed me with an opportunity to engage in two months of intense painting. I worked, often for 18 hours a day, high on a mountain of inspiration. I painted without the distractions of shopping, cooking, cleaning, errands, or paid employment. Within this sustained concentration, I felt myself gently open. The experience was pleasant, even wondrous. I literally, physically, felt my pieces floating apart, creating ever expanding, interstitial space. The space of potential and the space of opportunity created room to discard, add, enrich, and reorganize.

While resolving formal relationships of color, line, texture, and shape, establishing a journey for the eye through the way stations of focal points, I brought the artwork to completion. Simultaneously, in the spacious studio of myself, I witnessed the creation of a new me.

After I returned home, a poet friend saw me. Quietly, yet intensely, she exclaimed: “You are now like a finely woven piece of silk” (N. Yoos, personal communication, May, 1984).

Although May (1975) found encounter to be threatening and disorienting, my Ucross Foundation encounter led to joy, freedom, expansion, strength, and grounding. I achieved a new level of integration and a shift in my identity.

Initiation: Summary

Most apprentices go through an initiation process, which may be performed during a formal ritual or may be informal, even spontaneous. During initiation, the former self dies and a new self is born into a shaman. Some contemporary artists report a creative process that involves disintegration and reintegration of the self, which results in transformation to a higher degree of integration that may be accompanied by spiritual experience.

However, shamans and contemporary artists may differ in the purpose of undergoing initiation and disintegration. "The shaman…has a social rather than a personal reason for opening the psyche as he or she is concerned with the community and its well-being" (Halifax, 1983, p. 7). Shamanic initiation may ferry the apprentice into a new generative stage of development where serving others becomes the shaman's primary intent.

In contrast, artistic creativity can sometimes be performed primarily for the purpose of remembering and reintegrating an artist's self – especially if the artist is engaged in deficit creativity (see Celeste Rhodes, 1997, for a comparison of deficit creativity and being creativity). Deficit creativity might not indicate shamanic intent to benefit others – unless the artist is working at a level that marries and transcends the polarized concepts of deficit creativity and being creativity, at a stage where both processes are integrated, with one serving as a catalyst for the other. In addition, some contemporary artists make art with the intent to benefit individuals, communities, even ecosystems. The stages of shamanic initiation and the stages of artistic disintegration and reintegration are somewhat similar as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

Comparisons of Initiation

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Formal ritual	Yes, in a subset.	No*	Yes, in a subset.
Informal or spontaneous	Yes, in a subset.	May occur through metaphors, life experiences with significant meaning, during creative acts.	Not found, but likely as part of creative process.
Involves meaning structures from a shamanic cosmology.	Yes	No, except in a partial, fragmentary, or similar way, possibly resulting from influence of neoshamanism, studies of shamanism, or studies of mythology.	Yes
Uses altered states of consciousness to contact spirits, make journeys.	Yes, in a subset.	Artistic creative processes involve acts that result in alternative forms of consciousness.	Yes, in a subset.
Hallucinogens or entheogens.	Yes, in a subset.	Used by subset of artists. May be used recreationally without spiritual intent but, then, contributes to spiritual experiences and a transformation of beliefs. May be used deliberately as part of a spiritual practice.	Yes, in a subset.
Physical trials.	Yes, in a subset.	No, although there may be self-imposed physical trials.	Yes, in a subset.
Development of inner sight and/or new ways of seeing.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Experiences joy or ecstasy.	Yes, in a subset.	Yes, during creative flow. How similar this is to shamanic ecstasy requires further study.	Yes, in a subset.
Experiences suffering.	Yes, in a subset.	Suffering is part of life; however, initiatory suffering results in transformation.	Yes, in a subset.

Undergo physical dismemberment in dream, vision, or imagination.	Yes, in a subset.	May occur occasionally.	Yes, in a subset.
Disintegration of self.	Disintegration of shaman during séances, purported spirit possession, or journeying was reported and served as part of a creative healing process.	Positive disintegration as part of artistic creative process.	Creative disintegration likely but not found in data considered.
Trial by fire or other physical ordeals.	In subsets of shamanic cultures, can occur metaphorically or physically.	Can occur metaphorically. Trials may be externalized into human relationships, struggles with craft, etc.	Experienced metaphorically and/or physically by subset.
Metaphoric death	Former identity dies metaphorically.	May undergo transformation in identity/self.	Former identity dies metaphorically.
Remembering	During vision, dream, or imagination, an experience of the physically dismembered body as being reconstructed.	Metaphorically, as part of creative process, through reawakened memories, insight, and awareness. May occur symbolically in images, stories, or themes of artwork.	Through vision, dream, or imagination the dismembered body is experienced as being reconstructed. Also occurs as part of creative process.
Integration	Often. If a ritual involves voluntary disintegration of shaman, reintegration is achieved by end of ritual, with the process witnessed by ritual participants.	Often, but level at which integration occurs depends on personality, maturity, developmental stage of artist, etc.	Often
Rebirth	Often, either through vision, dream, or imagination, may be experienced physically and/or metaphorically.	Metaphorically, as part of creative processes, may occur repeatedly during different creative cycles.	May resemble either shamanic rebirth and/or creative process rebirth.
New identity as shaman.	Yes	Rarely acquires identity as shaman. May occur through self-identification (Beuys), be provided by fans, or be conferred by popular culture critics or researchers.	Yes

There is another difference between various forms of shamanic initiation and the disintegration/reintegraton creative cycle of artists. A shamanic apprentice goes through formal initiation once whereas an artist might go through the somewhat related process of disintegration and reintegration repeatedly for years. Perhaps the disintegration/reintegration cycle of artists is similar to ways in which some shamans undergo public disintegration during rituals, séances, voluntary spirit possession, or shamanic journeys as part of their spiritual practice (DuBois, 2009). Then, before the event ends, shamans are reintegrated. Ritual participants and observers can witness and vicariously experience disintegration and reintegration through the role model of the shaman (DuBois).

Title

Following initiation, shamanic societies refer to the initiate by a specialized title or common noun reserved for shamans. Bestowing a specific name or title upon a shaman is an explicit means of social designation. Many cultures have a language specific term that identifies a shaman (Znamenski, 2007) as well as common nouns for the stages of becoming a shaman. There are also different titles for different kinds of shamans within the community.

Hudildon is the Tungus title of a child called to shamanism; then, after the second year of apprenticeship is completed, the individual is called *jukejeren* (Chamberlain, 1896). The Chukchee also have a specific word for a shaman's apprentice that means "he gathers shamanistic power" (Czaplicka, 1914/1999, p. 178) while initiated shamans are placed in a specific category with a different label. *Boo* is a male shaman in the Selenginsk of Siberia (Swan, 1928) while *machi* refers to an Argentine shaman who is a

female or a transgendered male (Bolich, 2007). In Nepal, "the term *jhãkri* refers not only to the human practitioner, but also describes the shaman's most common tutelary deity…." (D. Walter, 2003) implying a merged identity. Shamans in South Korea are referred to by specialized titles such as *mudang* which encompasses both *mansin* (charismatic shamans) and *tan'gol mudang* (shamanism received through inheritance; Kendall, 2009).

Moreover, the expertise and experience of a shaman may be recognized through titles indicating the shaman's rank. Amidst the Hmong, shamans are categorized according to their degree of power. The Hmong "red cap" shaman is the most powerful whereas "black cap" and "blue cap" shamans are less powerful. As demonstrated by these varied examples, there are many distinct subclasses of shamans distinguished by certain qualities and related titles.

Are there contemporary artists who are also known as shamans? Yes – and the title of *shaman* was achieved through several different routes.

Traditional social designation granted artist Norval Morrisseau the title Grand Shaman of the Ojibwa People (Petten, 2008). Kim Kum Hwa, the South Korean shaman mentioned earlier, is called shaman, or *mudang* (Kim, 2003).

German artist Joseph Beuys, master of self-mythology and inventor of his own fictional autobiography (Funcke, 2008), purposefully gave himself the title *shaman.* Beuys explained:

> There are still actions today for which the figure of the shaman still seems to be most suitable. However, not in the sense of having to refer back to, in the sense of having to go back to a time where the shaman had its authority because it had been quite a spiritual context. Instead, I use this figure to express something about the future, by saying that the shaman once had stood for something that had been able to create a unity of material as well as spiritual connections. Thus, if we

> propose this figure in the age of materialism, we refer to something in that future. Therefore, it is only important that I slip into the role of the shaman to express a tendency of regression, that is, to go back to the past, back into the womb, but regression in the sense of progression, the futurological. (as cited in Funcke, 2008, p. 92)

During the West's reintroduction to shamanism, Beuys not only announced his intentions but also gave his audience clues to guide their experience. His work was interpreted as healing, ecstatic, mystical (Beuys & Walker Art Center, 1997), spiritual (Taylor, 2011), prophetic, and holy (Stafford, 2001).

Beuys succeeded in convincing many members of society that he was, indeed, a shaman and that his mythic transformation into a shaman was literally true. Through personal invention, genuine intent to heal, spiritual beliefs, and successful publicity, Beuys was eventually designated as a shaman by members of the art community and the press – as seen in the *New York Times* headline, "Joseph Beuys, Shaman of Postwar Germany" (Gibson, 1994).

Not everyone, however, accepted Beuys as a shaman. Like the pejorative labels applied to Siberian shamans by early explorers, skeptics referred to Beuys as a charlatan (Funcke, 2008). Beuys received social designation as a shaman from some, but not all, members of the art community.

How Beuys's community is defined determines whether or not he fulfills, entirely or partially, the social designation construct through the title *shaman*. If Beuy's community is limited to those individuals who believed Beuys was a shaman and who received shamanic experiences from Beuys's artwork, then Beuys qualifies as a shaman. If, however, skeptics and nonbelievers of the art community are included in Beuys's community, then Beuys is not seen as a shaman.

Even so, traditional shamanic societies believe that when someone chooses to become a shaman, the self-elected shaman is less powerful than shamans who inherit their powers or shamans who are called by spirits (Eliade, 1967).

Title: Discussion

In shamanic societies, there are special titles or common nouns that recognize and socially designate someone who is in the process of becoming a shaman. After initiation, different labels also refer to different kinds and different ranks of shamans. If someone decides to become a shaman – without receiving a calling or selection by a master shaman or other community authority - that shaman is usually believed to be less powerful.

There are contemporary artists who are not members of traditional shamanic communities that self-designate as shamans. In addition, there are contemporary artists who are deemed shamans by the media or popular culture. But, wearing the label *shaman* does not mean that these artists fulfill all constructs used to define *shaman* herein. Contemporary artists, who are members of traditional shamanic communities, usually undergo an apprenticeship and a formal initiation ritual before receiving social designation.

A comparison of these various ways of being explicitly socially designated via title is considered in Table 11.

Table 11

Comparison of Title

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Specific common nouns refer to different stages of becoming a shaman.	Often	No	Likely but not found.
Specific title or common noun indicating a shaman.	Yes	Yes, in subset, but usually self-titled or referred to as shaman in pop culture publication.	Yes
Self-titled?	Rarely	In subset, either refers to self as shaman or refers to work as shamanic.	Not found
Believe self-titled shaman is less powerful.	Usually	Not found	Not found

Social Designation: Chapter Summary and Discussion

This chapter compared stages in traditional processes that designate future shamans, apprentices, and initiates with contemporary artists, creative processes, and traditional shamanic artists.

Figure 13 is a "Tree" graphic organizer based on Hayakawa's (Hayakawa & Hayakawa, 1939/1990) ladder of abstractions. The "trunk" of the tree is the abstract concept *social designation* which then branches into a second level of abstract categories: prerequisites, signs of calling, apprenticeship, initiation, and title. While not exhaustive, Figure 13 sets out many of the subconstructs used to compare contemporary artists to shamans in the consideration of how societies designate shamans.

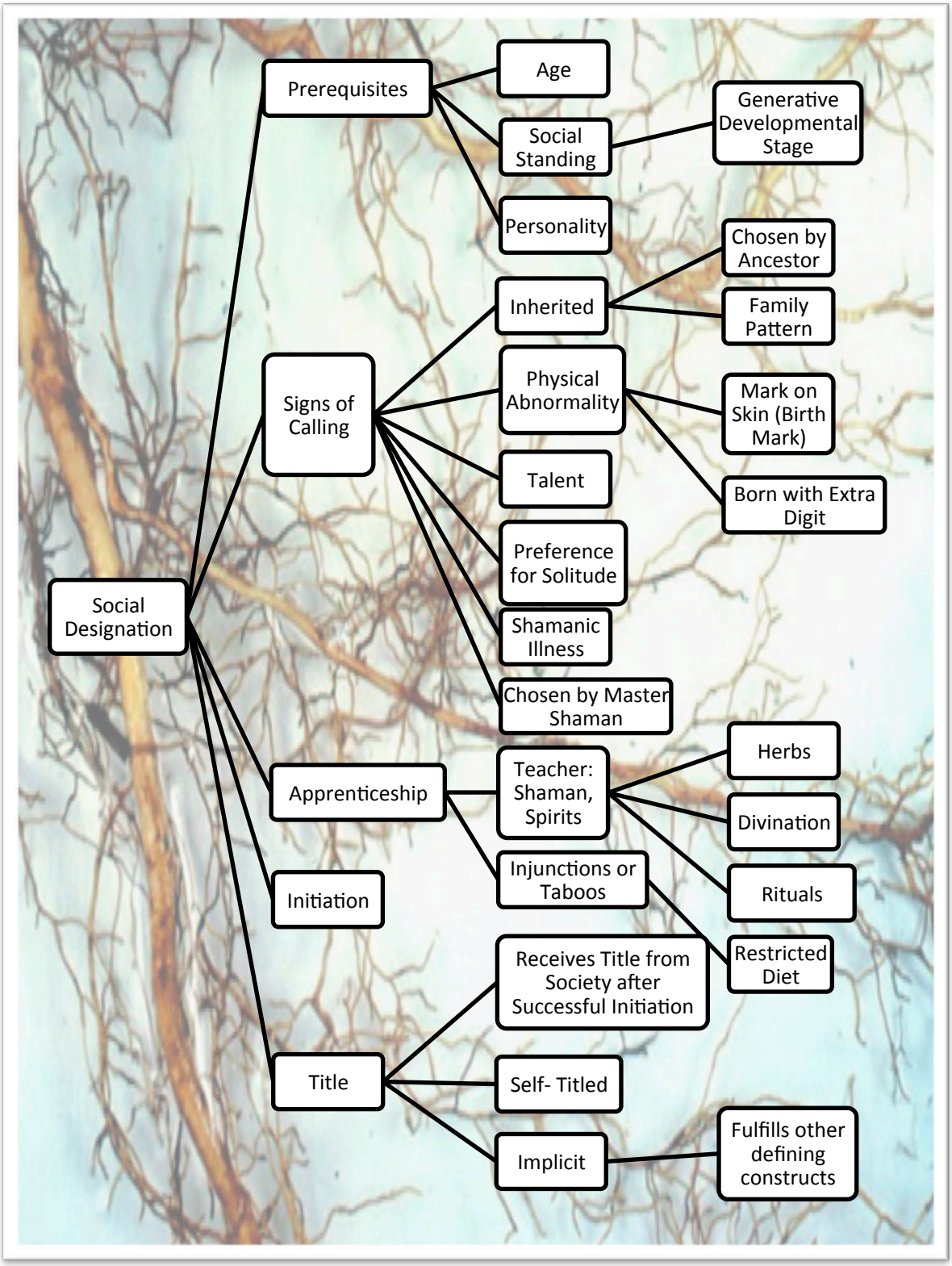


Figure 13. A ladder of abstraction representing the construct *social designation* and increasingly concrete levels of subconstructs used to compare contemporary artists to shamans.

From these branches, more specific concepts are listed. For example, *signs of calling* branches into a third level with *inherited, physical abnormality, talent, etc.* From the third level, the fourth level branches into concrete examples. So, moving across the abstract categories and noun classes to a specific concrete detail could follow this path: *social designation* to *signs of calling* to *physical abnormality* to *born with extra digit.*

Subconstructs that are observed or performed by shamanic candidates, apprentices, or ritual participants – prior to the community's bestowal of the title shaman – do not represent social designation of a *shaman.* Instead, fulfilling the pre-title subconstructs indicates social recognition of someone's shamanic potential and establishes the stages and processes through which someone *becomes* a shaman.

As the subconstructs become more concrete and specific, that is, "chosen by ancestor" or taught use of "herbs," contemporary artists were less likely to fulfill these categories – unless the contemporary artist is also from a shamanic community. Even so, traditional shamans do not need to demonstrate all possible signs of calling or study all kinds of shamanic knowledge to eventually be socially designated as shamans. There are variations in beliefs and practices from society to society and even from clan to clan or from family to family, according to Guo Shuyun (personal communication, October, 2011), co-editor of the forthcoming *Encyclopedia of Shamanism* (Shuyun, Weibo,, & Fang, in press).

A review of the literature found that contemporary artists who were also members of traditional shamanic societies showed the most direct and complete fulfillment of subconstructs indicating social recognition of future shamans: inheritance, unusual signs at birth, calling from spirits, shamanic illness, apprenticeship, and initiation. However,

stages in the process of becoming a shaman are not the same as being a shaman. Initiation must be successfully completed before the community bestows a title indicating a shaman. Subsets of contemporary artists, who were not members of traditional shamanic societies, showed mixed results in comparisons to how future shamans are recognized and initiated shamans are socially designated.

The data considered showed that subsets of contemporary artists, who are not members of traditional shamanic communities, experienced decontextualized (e.g., without shamanic community or shamanic cosmology), partial, somewhat similar, and/or fragmented forms of calling to shamanism.

Whether shamans also experience cycles of creative disintegration and reintegration is currently unknown; however, there may be additional creative disintegration and reintegration cycles that occur as shamans gain expertise and move higher in rank, invent new songs, dances, or other kinds of shamanic art forms, or respond to environmental press in the form of community or individual needs.

As a result of the comparisons made regarding social designation, there appears to be a *subset* of contemporary artists that fulfill a few signs of calling to shamanism with transliminality appearing to be the most frequent commonality. Contact with different forms of spirits was reported by a subset of contemporary artists; however, these spirits were not part of a shamanic cosmology.

These results are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Comparison of Social Designation

	Shamans	*Subset* of Contemporary Artists	Traditional Shamanic artists
Social Recognition of Future Shaman			
Inheritance of shamanic talents & calling.	Often.	Partial. Not found except for purported psi abilities, musical talent.	Morrisseau Amaringo
Inheritance of artistic talents & calling.	Likely but not reported in data.	Usually. Many traits associated with artists and creativity have a genetic component.	Not found; however, Morrisseau and Amaringo come from shamanic families.
Unusual signs at birth.	Occasionally	No	Soós
Transliminality (especially desire for solitude, purported psi experiences, sensitivity, mystical & anomalous experiences, magical thinking, schizotypy, imagination, intuition, heightened empathy).	Most traits were found.	Appears to be more typical of creative individuals and artists. Most traits found in specific artists.	Most traits were found.
Prerequisite: Generativity	Often	Possibly – likely in artists who make art with an intent to heal or bring benefits to others.	Often
Calling			
Calling from spirits in shamanic cosmology.	Usually	Not found.	Usually, see in Kim Kum Hwa and Pablo Amaringo
Spirit Possession	Yes, in a subset.	Reported by Jim Morrison.	Kim Kum Hwa
Calling from spirits that are not part of shamanic cosmology.	No	Contact with spirits reported by a subset of artists. Spirit contact experienced in a variety of forms. Visions: William Blake and Allen Ginsberg.	Not found

		Séance: Hilma af Klint. Dreams recorded in poetry: Lord Byron. Art Spirit: Wassily Kandinsky and Robert Henri. *Zeitgeist:* Wassily Kandinsky. Christian deity in form of wilderness: Thomas Cole. Power of nature (but not conceptualized as a spirit): Arthur Dove, Georgia O'Keefe, Charles Burchfield.	
Accept calling to shamanism.	Yes	A subset of artists may respond to circumstances of environmental press (external need) and, as a result, commit to serving an audience. A subset of artists become shamanlike in their desire to heal and benefit their audience, Joseph Beuys	Yes
Negative consequences for rejecting calling to shamanism.	Often	Not found	Not found
Negative consequences for rejecting calling to becoming an artist.	Not applicable	Reported by a subset of artists.	Not found
Apprenticeship or training			
Training in nonartistic shamanic skills and knowledge.	Yes	Small subset of artists undertook autodidact study in ritual, mythology, spiritism, or other topics related to shamanism, or sought teachers that were shamans. Wassily Kandinsky was familiar with shamanism through his involvement in anthropology.	Yes

Training in art related shamanic skills.	Often	Formal, academic training in art is generally not explicitly related to shamanic practices. Subset developed and invented art related shamanic skills through autodidact study, involvement in neopaganism or neoshamanism, or study in traditional cultures (see information on Lauren Raine later in this dissertation).	Yes, including autodidact study.
Acquire and control powers.	Yes	Many, perhaps most artists learn skills to control artistic talent and creativity, but to various degrees.	Yes, Pablo Amaringo Kim Kum Hwa
Initiation			
Formal initiation.	Often	Not found	Yes, in a subset.
Informal initiation.	Reports of spontaneous initiation were found.	Maybe, possibly a parallel process in creativity.	Not found, perhaps occurred during Morrisseau's dream, interpreted by him as permission to resume drawing spirits and myths.
Dismemberment & reconstruction	Often	Yes, metaphorically, in some artists.	Not found, possibly.
Disintegration & reintegration during creativity.	Not found	Yes, as part of creative process.	Likely, but not found in data considered.
Rebirth	Often, experienced as literal/real.	Metaphorically and psychologically, through creative process.	Often
Title			
Title bestowed by community.	Yes	Given title via popular media: Patti Smith. Given title by art historian: Wassily Kandinsky.	Yes
Self-titled as shaman.	Rarely	Rarely: Joseph Beuys and Jim Morrison.	Not found.

Generativity appears to be a prerequisite for becoming a shaman in some shamanic societies. Generativity might be found to typify a subset of contemporary artists who create art with the intent of healing social ills (see description of Lauren Raine's mythic, ritual performance later in this dissertation).

Another potential, albeit partial and metaphoric, similarity between shamans and contemporary artists is a parallel process between dismemberment and remembering experienced by future shamans during initiation and the cycle of positive disintegration and reintegration experienced by a subset of contemporary artists.

With a subset of contemporary artists, the process of election and training does not appear to be linear or achieve a final transformation via initiation. A few contemporary artists are referred to as shamans either because they give themselves the title or because popular media reviewers or art historians described these artists as shamans; however, these means of receiving the title *shaman* does not mean that these artists fulfill all constructs defining *shaman* herein.

In comparisons with shamanic candidates, apprentices, or participants in initiation rituals, there are partial and fragmentary similarities, metaphoric relationships, and possible associations with subsets of contemporary artists – especially with regards to transliminality, reports of contact with spirits, likely generativity, and the cycle of positive disintegration and reintegration.

Nonetheless, those who are called to be shamans are not yet shamans. The partial, fragmented traits and experiences of a subset of contemporary artists may be surviving remnants of hunter-gatherer shamanic practices. Perhaps as a result of this fragmented

and incomplete process, artists may experience aspects of calling, training, and initiation repeatedly throughout their creative career, in a cycle also known as creativity.

Chapter 6: Spiritual Practitioner

The White Tara, from *Masks of the Goddess,* Lauren Raine © 2004.

One becomes an athlete of God.

Martha Graham (1894-1991)
American choreographer
(Apostolos-Cappadona & Ebersole, 2001, p. 145)

In this chapter, after operationalizing *spiritual* and *practitioner,* I begin the process of comparing contemporary artists to shamans within considerations of practices and beliefs associated with divination, mediumship, inspiration, occult, mythic

consciousness, animism, and ritual. Each practice or belief is considered separately, looking first at how some shamanic cultures engage in these beliefs and practices and then exploring how select contemporary artists have engaged in these beliefs and practices.

Examples of spiritual practitioners are drawn from the Tlingit, Haida, Shaker, Mongolian, Arnhem Land Aborigine, Irish, European Australian, Mande, Bamana, English, Russian, Czech, French, Romanian, Cherokee, European American, Tsimshian, South Korean, and Congolese Mande and Bamana cultures.

Data on the following artists contributed to comparisons or discussions: Martha Graham, William Michael Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, James McNeil, Wassily Kandinsky, Ivan Turgenev, Enjai Eele, Amnue Eele, Hilma af Klint, František Kupka, Victor Hugo, James Merrill, David Jackson, Susan Hiller, Henri Matisse, Leodardi, Roland Robinson, Alexander Vesper, Ethel Gordon, David Carpenter, Constantin Brancusi, Lauren Raine, Anne Weller, Manna Youngbear, Christy Salo, Katherine Josten, and this author. These artists created in many different forms of art: choreography, story telling, painting, fiction, poetry, song, installations, sculpture, performance ritual, masks, and memory boards.

Research from psychology, parapsychology, alternative medicine, sociology, genetics, anthropology, and religion contributed examples and data used in comparisons. Archival data on contemporary artists, including articles written by artists and published interviews with artists, is enriched by autobiographical stories from my own life.

The chapter concludes with an overarching discussion and summary presenting general results of the comparisons.

Operationalization of Constructs

Spiritual, as opposed to material or corporal, refers to that which is often conceived as immaterial, concerns a supernatural essence or being, and might or might not be associated with a sense of the sacred or a religion (Spiritual, 2011).

Krippner (2006) differentiated *spirituality* from *religious* as follows:

> For me, the word "religious" refers to the adherence to an organized system of beliefs about the divine (something deemed worthy of veneration and worship) and the observance of rituals, rites, and requirements of that belief system. 'Spirituality,' on the other hand, can be thought of as one's focus on, and/or reverence, openness, and connectedness to some process or entity believed to be beyond one's full understanding and/or individual existence. Any rituals, behaviors, or beliefs that accompany this process are internally generated rather than reflective of an external authority or institution. (para. 2)

In the *Oxford English Dictionary*, *spiritual* is defined as "affecting or concerning, the spirit or higher moral qualities, especially as regarded in a religious aspect" as distinct to that which is "bodily, corporal, or temporal" (Spiritual, 2011b). *Spiritual* can refer to "songs" that are "devotional, sacred." Opposed to secular matters, *spiritual* can mean that which consists of spirit, "in either a religious or intellectual aspect; of the nature of a spirit or incorporeal supernatural essence; immaterial."

Writing from an artist's perspective, Peggy Thayer (2003) commented, "the spiritual is an experience of connection with a power greater than one's personal self, which brings a shift in ordinary awareness. With this shift can come feelings of unity, of oneness, stillness, ecstasy, or bliss" (p. 5). Deikman understood spiritual experience as "an intuitive perception of oneness with the universe, often accompanied by feelings of reverence and awe" (Deikman as cited in Starker, 1985, p. 134). These definitions are similar to mysticism and what Maslow (1971, 1994) referred to as "peak experience."

In *The Idea of the Holy,* Otto Rank (1923) described the common features of spiritual experience as holy or numinous:

> The reflection in human feeling of this awareness, as it changes and grows richer and more unmistakable; a response…to the impact upon the human mind of the divine…the confrontation of the human mind with a Something…which is first felt as a transcendent presence the beyond, even where it is also felt as the within. (p. xv)

To summarize, *spiritual* may involve a sense of divinity, deity, animistic spirits, universal being, or, less frequently, morality. That which is *spiritual* is not corporeal or material, yet may be experienced as within one's self, outside of one's self, or encompassing all.

Spiritual is closely related to *mysticism* in that a spiritual experience is often mystical in nature; that is, an ecstatic union, sense of oneness, or marriage, with what is referred to as "the Absolute, the Infinite, or God" (Merkur, 2011, para. 1) or, alternatively, an experience of nothing or nothingness in which the soul disappears, "leaving only the mind, emotion, or the will of God" (para. 6). In such union, the "identity of the personal self" may be joined with "the cosmic self" or "divine essence...pure consciousness" (para. 14). A mystical experience may involve recognition of the common source and fabric of all beings and all things. The mystic may gain insight into the source of creation.

That which is *spiritual* is often *numinous*, which means "filled with a sense of the presence of divinity" and holy (Numinous, 2010).

To summarize, the various qualities of *spiritual* involve an experience of or belief in supernatural beings that can include deities, spirits, universal being, divinity, pure consciousness, or the infinite. *Spiritual* experiences can be mystical with a sense of ecstatic union with a supernatural entity, an achievement of nonduality, or a transpersonal

sense of self joined with a supernatural entity, infinity, or pure consciousness. Generally, that which is *spiritual* is conceived of as immaterial and noncorporeal; yet, that which is *spiritual* can be experienced through that which is physical including art, nature, and physical or sensory experiences. *Spiritual* experience can provide a vision of original creation, all that is, or the common source of all things. Occasionally, *spiritual* refers to an intellectual aspect of spirit or a higher moral sensibility.

A *practitioner* (2010) is someone who practices or, more specifically, practices a vocation. Like a family doctor who practices medicine, a shaman practices shamanism. The shaman's practice may include the performance of socially beneficial actions such as soul retrieval (Walter & Neumann Fridman, 2004), divination (B. Tedlock, 2005), finding game (Rapinsky-Naxon, 1993), negotiating with spirits (Webb, 2003), bringing fertility, assisting with the births of babies, protecting villages (B. Tedlock, 2008), and treating "tensions, fears, and conflicts" (Lewis, 2003, p. 177) within marriages, families, clans, tribes, ethnicities, nations, and even relationships with the earth. Most shamans believe that, through their intermediary practices, they can access spirits, engage spirits in communication, and enlist spirits to assist with meeting the needs of their communities.

Divination Channels

Some shamans as well as a small subset of contemporary artists, use divination practices. Alleged precognition (the supposed spontaneous, advance knowledge of the future) was also reported by subsets of shamans and artists.

Both divination and precognition are often, but not always, associated with spirituality. Divination, "the art or practice that seeks to foresee or foretell future events or discover hidden knowledge" is performed through "the interpretation of omens or by

the aid of supernatural powers" (Divination, 2012). Less commonly, the definition of divination can also encompass precognition, "unusual insight," or "intuitive perception" (Divination).

Amidst many shamanic societies, divination served many practical purposes. Divination "was not viewed as a disassociated attitude but as integrated into every aspect of survival" (Edson, 2009, p. 141), used as a means of selecting building and burial sites, the best days to marry, hunt, make war, perform a ritual, or make a journey. Shamans performed divination "to achieve desired results or to avoid unwanted outcomes" (Edson, p. 144).

The urologist David Cumes was also trained and initiated as a *sangoma* (a shaman) in his native country, South Africa. Cumes (2012a) works towards "bridging Western allopathic medicine and ancient African healing wisdom" (para. 2) believing:

> Western medicine has brought us many boons but there are glaring deficiencies as well. We focus too much on the intellectual, cognitive and scientific and too little on the intuitive, receptive, artistic, compassionate and mystical. Going back to our root or core self with the help of ancient African wisdom gives us not only an understanding of our origins but a clear perspective of a new and, at the some time, very old paradigm of healing not confined to the space/time continuum. (para. 2)

As part of his shamanic practice, Cumes (2012c) throws bones to make diagnosis. Cumes explained that ancestor spirits are unable to communicate directly because they "live in the realm of spirit." Instead, spirits "choose to talk through trance-channeling (possession states) or through the metaphor of the 'bones'" (para. 1).

I observed Cumes demonstrating a simple throwing the 'bones' which were, as I recall, four rectangular pieces of bone carved with simple lines and dots that identify four characters: old man, old woman, young man, and young woman. The collection of 'bones' used for divination can also include "shells, money seeds, dice…and other

objects that have been appointed by the *sangoma* and the spirit to represent certain polarities" (Cumes, 2012b, para. 2). Animal bones represent the "primal energies and attributes the animals represent" and "hold enormous power" (Cumes, para. 2).

Before the 'bones' are thrown, the *sangoma* invokes and calls forth the ancestor spirits. The 'bones' do not fall randomly when thrown but assume a "distinct arrangement" (Cumes, 2012b, para. 4) that can be read by the healer. "It seems that a 'mini-field' of attention, intention, and coherence is set up between the healer, the patient, and the ancestors that allows the bones to lie in an intelligent pattern" (Cumes, para. 4). Interpretations are checked with the client and if the interpretations do not seem applicable or accurate, then the *sangoma* will consider a different pairing of polarities and make another interpretation. In this particular divination practice, the client determines the accuracy and applicability of the *sangoma's* interpretations.

B. Tedlock (2005) listed several additional means of divination used by shamans, "such as clouds, tea leaves, birds, and animal entrails, as well as abalone, cowry, and other shells. A proper analysis of these events and objects unveils a hidden, deeper, subtler cosmic message invisible to a casual observer" (p. 21).

Essence and Insight

> When creative process brings us more fully into the moment
> beyond preconceptions, fears, and distorting ideas of self and world,
> toward richer contact with the phenomenal world,
> what new awarenesses might arise?
>
> Ruth Richards (2010, p. 193)

Hidden, deep, and subtle cosmic messages also appear to be divined by some artists. During the same period when writers spoke of the artist's spirit, roughly 1880 to

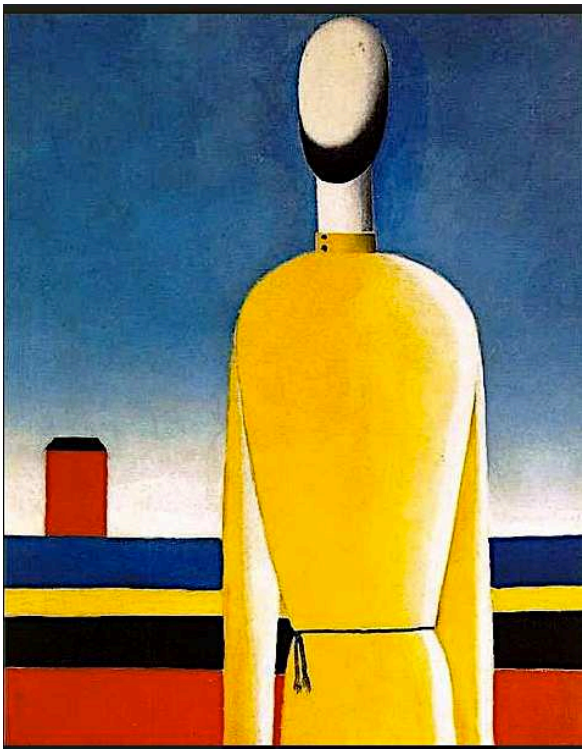
1920, the phrase “artistic divination” was also common. William Michael Rossetti (1829-1919), English writer and critic, brother of painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti, and a founder of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, reviewed an exhibit of paintings by European American James McNeil Whistler. Rossetti (1877) described how a Whistler landscape communicated with him, writing “a great reach and surface of water are conveyed to the eye by a sort of artistic divination, a curious power of intuition and suggestion....” (p. 467).

Symphony in Grey and Green: The Ocean, James McNeil Whistler, 1866-1872, oil painting.

For Rossetti, the expressive quality of art went beyond physical manipulation of media, color, line, light or shade, transcending painterly sleight-of-hand and “magic” tricks that deceive the eye and brain into interpreting a flat picture plane covered with

pigment as leaves, waves, sky, deep space, time of day, and season of year. Through art, it was believed, spiritual essences could be accessed by the audience because "the artist's divination" succeeded in reproducing "the essential characteristic, the dominating mood" of the subject (McDowall, 1918, p. 146). Kandinsky (1914/1977) also believed that artistic divination could access essence, including the inner spirit of nature.

Lloyd (1911) saw how Shubin, a sculptor in the novel *On the Eve* (Turgenev, 1859) possessed the powers of insight and empathy, "the artist's divination of another's pain" (p. 127). Shubin also saw through social pretenses and could, through the medium of sculpture, skewer his subject's faults. These abilities represent the kind of divination associated with insight and intuition (see Divination, 2012). Other kinds of artistic divination are performed to access the future and make predictions.



Complex Presentiment: Half-Figure in a Yellow Shirt, Kazimir Malevich, 1928-1932.

Precognition through Art

Foreknowledge of war?

Divination, in the sense of foreknowledge or precognition, was reported by a subset of artists in the data collected. In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections,* Carl Jung (1988b) recounted his experience prior to a series of visions or hallucinations and dreams that he interpreted as foreknowledge of World

War I:

> Towards the autumn of 1913 the pressure which I had felt was in me seemed to be moving outwards, as though there were something in the air. The atmosphere actually seemed to me darker than it had been. It was as though the sense of oppression no longer sprang exclusively from a psychic situation, but from concrete reality. This feeling grew more and more intense. (p. 169)

Within a few months, Jung (1988b) experienced a seemingly spontaneous vision of a "frightful catastrophe…. mighty yellow waves, the floating rubble of civilization, and the drowned bodies of uncounted thousands. Then the whole sea turned to blood…." (p. 170). Within two weeks, the vision "recurred…even more vividly than before, and the blood was more emphasized." Jung then heard a voice from within that commanded, "'Look at it well; it is wholly real and it will be so. You cannot doubt it'" (p. 170). Jung initially interpreted the visions as hallucinations symptomatic of psychosis.

A few months later, Jung dreamt thrice of freezing cold, ice, lands deserted by humans, all plants killed by frost. Within a couple months, World War I began. Jung interpreted his visions and dreams as foreknowledge of the coming war. Then, during the war, Jung (2009) recorded significant hallucinations, or visions, in writing and painting, within his *Red Book.* Jung believed this information erupted from a place not accessible from normal consciousness.

The first European abstract artist, prolific Swedish painter and clairvoyant Hilma af Klint (1862-1944,) was known as a clairvoyant and spiritist by her contemporaries. Klint appears to have presaged World War II in her artwork:

> What is slightly unnerving is that, in 1932, Af Klint produced a number of watercolours predicting the second world war. One, titled A Map/The Blitz, shows a fiery wind, coming from Europe, curling from Southampton round the coast to Liverpool and London. Another map depicts "the fights in the Mediterranean," with a brown cloud spreading over North Africa, southern Italy, Gibraltar and Bordeaux. (Searle, 2006)

While Jung's visions appear to have occurred spontaneously, without seeking knowledge, Klint deliberately contacted spirits during séances. Klimt stated that she received knowledge, guidance, and inspiration from a spirit named Ananda, a leader in the spiritual world, as well as other spirits. In 1904, Klint understood Ananda as instructing her to "execute paintings on the astral plane" (Klint as cited in Searle, 2006, para. 1).

A subset of contemporary artists also employed traditional methods of divination with the explicit goal of foretelling the future. In Africa and its diasporas, when certain traditional beliefs are maintained, twins are linked with powers of divination. Enjai and Amnue Eele, known simply as "The Twins" in the New York City art world, are also members of the Luba or Li-Maa Clan from the Katanga province of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They are the descendants of a "Luba Master Iron Artist.... the second male only in our Clan to be born with the ability to Divine...." (Peek, 2011, p. 264).

In Luba society, a special group is charged with divination through memory boards:

> Lukasa, or memory boards, are hand-held wooden objects that present a conceptual map of fundamental aspects of Luba culture. They are at once

> illustrations of the Luba political system, historical chronicles of the Luba state, and territorial diagrams of local chiefdoms. Each board's design is unique and represents the divine revelations of a spirit medium expressed in sculptural form. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006, para. 1)
>
> Mbudye is a council of men and women charged with sustaining and interpreting the political and historical principles of the Luba state. As authorities on the tenets of Luba society, mbudye provide a counterbalance to the power of kings and chiefs, checking or reinforcing it as necessary. Members of mbudye proceed through a series of stages within the society as they master successive levels of arcane knowledge. Only those at the apex of the association can decipher and interpret the lukasa's intricate designs and motifs…. (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2006, para. 2)

In the United States, The Twins created memory boards that were collaborative divination projects resulting from Enjai's paintings and Amnau's writing. They believed these artistic activities could access knowledge of the future.

Before the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States, Enjai used divination and numerology involving letters in the names *Manhattan* and *Mohamed Atta* – who was the hijacker-pilot who crashed American Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center, on Manhattan Island in New York City, as part of the terrorist attacks. Enjai noted that *Manhattan* has nine letters and *Mohamed Atta* has 11, indicating *9/11* which was the date of the terrorist attack. Enjai also saw the presence of the name *Atta* within *Manhattan.* Based on these relationships, Enjai then painted, and copyrighted, *The Atta Page* in which two planes crash into the Twin Towers in New York City. The divination acts and the painting were completed *before* the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. (Peek, 2011, p. 264).

Without a deliberate divination process, European American artist Alex Grey created *Gaia* in 1989, also prior to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The painted images included a jet airplane crashing into the Twin Towers. Grey also interpreted other

elements of the painting as evidence of knowledge about the future and his understanding of political relationships in that same time (Allocco, 2007).

Divination: Discussion

Some shamans engage in divination for practical purposes related to survival, aiding in making decisions, achieving goals, and avoiding negative outcomes. These divination practices often use an analysis and interpretation of the disposition of objects to gain knowledge.

A subset of contemporary artists also engaged in various forms of deliberate or spontaneous divination. These spiritual practices were believed to:

- Allow artists to access, know, and express the essence of something;
- Provide keen insight into individuals, situations, and events;
- Discern future events either through deliberate divination practices; or
- Discover knowledge of the future through the creative process of making art.

In addition to qualifying as spiritual practices, these putative forms of divination could qualify as ways by which a subset of contemporary artists might access knowledge generally unavailable to members of their community, thus fulfilling a second construct defining *shaman*. Divination could also be considered as a way to voluntarily regulate attention.

Conceivably, artistic divination could benefit members of the art audience – which includes the artists. Members of the art audience benefit from viewing putative spirit-channeled paintings by Hilma af Klint, but whether art audiences, singly or as groups, benefitted from foreknowledge conveyed in purported divinatory art was not

found. The artistic divination practices were found to provide three, possibly four pieces needed to complete a "whole" *shaman* "puzzle" as represented in the Figure 14 pie chart.

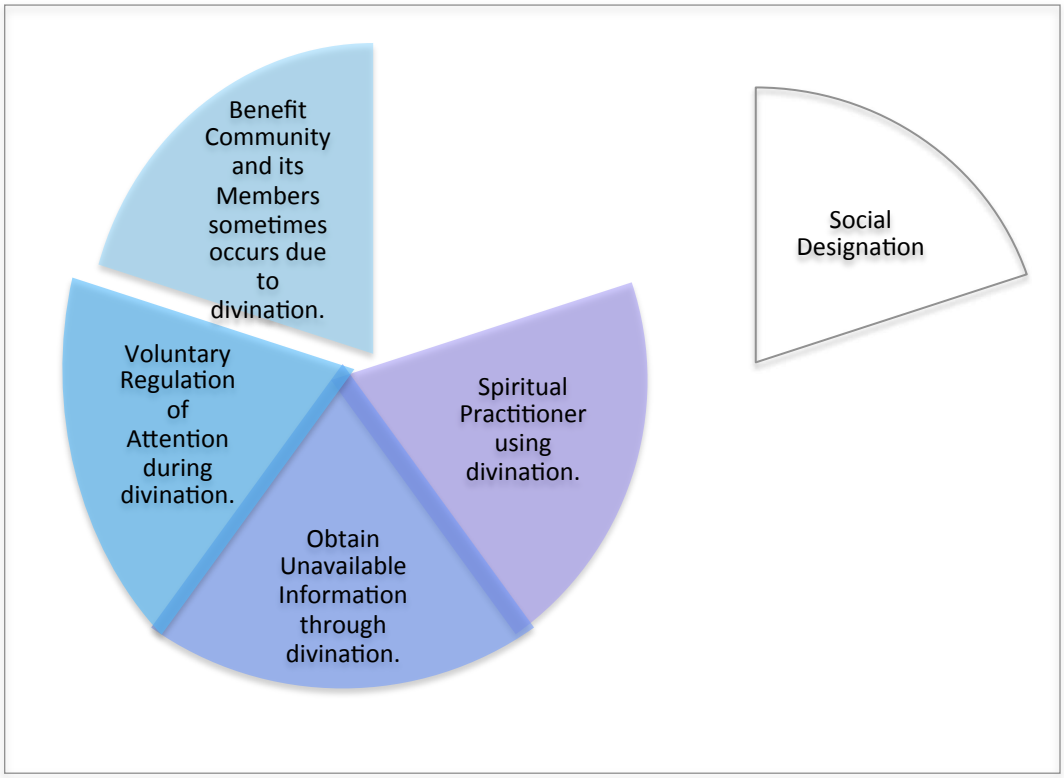


Figure 14. Divination practices, used by artists such as Hilma alf Klint, can fulfill 4 out of 5 construct groups defining *shaman.*

In some situations, the presence of foreknowledge or precognition is recognized *after* the supposed foreseen event occurs. While some artistic forms of precognition appear to be quite accurate, other forms of reported precognition seem to be highly dependent on interpretations made in hindsight, after the foreseen events occur.

One could argue that Carl Jung, Hilma af Klint, The Twins, and Alex Grey were keenly sensitive to the powerful, up swelling *Zeitgeist* of their time, felt the unrelenting

march of history towards war, and expressed what they felt and sensed in their artwork – through a kind of divination involving "unusual insight" or "intuitive perception" (Divination, 2012).

Another interpretation could be made from a psychopathological perspective identifying the seemingly precognitive experiences reported by these artists as indications of magical thinking associated with a schizotypal personality disorder. Yet, the specific painted representations of airplanes crashing into the Twin Towers – painted by Enjai Eele and by Alex Grey – seem to foretell a specific event that did, tragically, occur.

Artist-researcher's perspective. As a kind of phenomenological confirmation for those artists who performed divination and received foreknowledge, I can also report what seemed to be foreknowledge of the future, sometimes associated with creating art. However, my experiences of foreknowledge were not deliberately sought.

Two autobiographical stories[10], sharing experiences of art that seemed to indicate foreknowledge, are offered below. Like the tales in *Okkulte Stimmen. Mediale Musik (Recordings of Unseen Intelligences 1905-2007* (Fishcher, 2007), these stories are not provided as evidence of psi but as examples of experiential events worthy of attention.

Painted doorways: Foreknowledge of child? Artistic divination of the future might also involve more personal, familial realms. In my own artistic creative processes, on a few occasions, I experienced a sudden recognition that what I painted in the past seemed to have become a living reality.

For example, in a six-foot tall watercolor eventually entitled *The Healing Path*, I lamented loss and cradled hope. I painted a child with golden curls who gazes across the

[10] The stories "Painted Doorways: Foreknowledge of Child" and "Dream Corridor to Foreknowledge of Future?" are from an article (Benyshek, 2013) reprinted here with permission from *ReVision, a Journal of Consciousness and Transformation* (www.revisionpublishing.org).

ocean at either a colorful dawn or a vivid sunset. For myself, I interpreted the time depicted as dawn, symbolizing a new beginning.

Fifteen years later, my golden son was born.

As a toddler, he was adamantly against a haircut. I thought, “It’s his hair. It’s his choice.” His hair grew until the blond curls reached down his back. He did not care what others thought, proudly declaring “I’m a boy!”

Years later, in an essay, I included a photograph of my son at age three with his long, golden curls. Then, after several pages, I inserted a detail from *The Healing Path.* During the final edit, I recognized the golden child in both images.

I suddenly “felt” – like a bolt of knowing that shot through me – that “the spirit of painting” knew my son *fifteen years before his birth*.

Hans van Wyk, age 3, photograph. *The Healing Path,* detail, Denita Benyshek, watercolor, gouache, ink.

It seemed as though the act of painting, and the deep connection I made emotionally to the subject matter, provided access to a different point in time or, possibly,

that the painted golden child had functioned as a positive visualization that structured the future.

Like Grey during his painting of *Gaia,* I did not recognize the seemingly precognitive images in *The Healing Path* until after the event was played upon the stage of consensual reality. Also like Grey, I did not directly recognize the resemblance between painting and reality. After the planes struck the Twin Towers, people familiar with *Gaia* recognized the similarities between Grey's painting and the terrorist attack. For me, it was writing and then editing an essay in which both images were placed a few pages apart. Due to the proximity of the two images, I recognized the seemingly magical relationship between the images and then constructed a meaningful interpretation.

The shaman who desires a song
does not fix his or her mind
on particular words
nor sing a known tune.

In dreams or other dreamlike states,

the song

comes through the barrier
that separates
the human being
from the spirit world.
(Halifax, 1983, p. 32)

Bartok, Denita Benyshek, reverse-painted glass.

Dream corridor to foreknowledge of the future? Dreams can sometimes seem like divinatory corridors that allow the artists or shaman to glimpse the future. Funk (2000) mentioned that "creators reported insights in dreams, sometimes of a paranormal nature; that is, they seemed to exhibit some degree of extrasensory knowledge (ESP)" (p. 63). My personal experience confirmed creative ESP, as demonstrated by the following lucid dream:

> I paint upon a canvas pinned to a wall. I stand near the painting, working intently, swimming in creative flow.
>
> I feel the weight of gravity. Light pours down upon the wall, from somewhere behind me, from up high.
>
> On the canvas, I work on the upper left corner which is white but thick with oil paint. I add black lines that curve this way and that.
>
> I observe the dream and think, "This is not like a dream. This is like reality."
>
> I float a green glaze over the white and black, making a transparent tint. Because I stand so close to the painting, without stepping back, I never view the entire work.

Years later, I still remember this dream clearly - and the dream's surprise entrance into consensual reality.

Five months later, at a remote art foundation, the director gave me a private studio with a high bank of clerestory windows illuminating the opposite wall. I stretched canvases with pushpins into this wall. After completing all preconceived paintings, I decided to paint spontaneously.

I stood near the painting. I drew the torsos of a woman and a man. The transparent figures, including their hearts and the rivers of blood veins, physically interconnect. I felt the weight of gravity. I painted two spirals, indicating the woman's ovaries and fallopian tubes, merging in the wine glass of her womb.

Light poured down upon the wall, from behind me, from up high.

Two more spirals represented the generative power of the man. I worked on the upper left corner, which was white but thick with oil paint, painting about creativity. I added black lines that curved this way and that. Black lines and luminous, jewel-like colors suggested stained glass.

I floated a transparent green glaze over the white and black corner.

Suddenly, as though lightening struck me, I remembered the dream.

The dream was now concrete, painted into waking reality.

Woman and Man: The Human Animal, Denita Benyshek. Oil on canvas.

My knees weakened. Life presented a choice: sit down or fall down. I sat.

Confused, my concept of time fell apart, dismembered, and irreparable. Past, present, and future no longer fit on a linear continuum. How could I dream about the studio at the art foundation before my physical arrival, before my application was considered? How did I see the painting before the "spontaneous" act of painting it?

I thought I was creating spontaneously, making a stream of choices in the moment, yet the painting obviously already existed somewhere, with all choices made.

If the painting already existed, who was the artist, me or some entity speaking through me? How could I orient myself in nonlinear time and nonlocal space? Did I exist in three realms, past, present, and future, at the same time? Could I travel, like a shaman, not only up and down to different realms, but also backwards and forwards in time? Is time a level of consciousness?

How did I access this?

Such questions, according to S. Krippner (personal communication, 2006) are "only a problem if one thinks in linear terms. Most indigenous shamans come from societies with different time models." Certainly, my precognitive dream pushed me towards a different understanding of time and space.

May (1975) recognized the power of artists as "frontier scouts who go out ahead of the rest of us to explore the future" (pp. 146-147). These explorations also provide contemporary artists with access to information that is generally unavailable, or less available, to many members of their communities and audiences.

Time is generally considered the fourth dimension of space. Perhaps this fourth dimension is explored during liminal acts such as painting, dreaming, and shamanizing. Shamans voluntarily regulate their attention, sometimes taking journeys to imaginal

realms (Noel, 1997; Winkelman, 2000) where they transcend conventional Western concepts of space and time (Kraus, 1972). Likewise, during creative voyages, many artists readily sail away from what Bourdieu (1990) referred to as "homogenous, continuous space" (p. 84).

James McNeil Whistler, *Grey and Silver: Old Battersea Beach*, oil painting, 1863.

Mediumships

I know that there is a world of the spirit that can be approached,
that its being is undeniable once one has experienced it.

Robert Motherwell (Caws, 2006, p. 19)
American Abstract Expressionist Artist

Consider the definition of medium. Medium means midway or between. Heinze (1982) studied shamans and mediums, concluding that both:

> Are individuals who mediate between different states of consciousness for those who seek immediate, personal experience of spiritual powers. Mediums and shamans fulfill spiritual and psychological needs, which cannot be satisfied otherwise. Both have command over a wide range of alternate states of consciousness, which they use for the benefit of others. (p. 38)

Also, shamans are similar to diviners, seers, and mediums when responding to "client's request to heal or to make prophecies after they have 'incorporated' spirits" (Krippner, 2004b, p. 205) that "may be an ancestor, a powerful entity or god, or a protective animal spirit" (Millay, 1999, p. 188).

Shamanic candidates were described as "involuntary patients who do not control the spirits that afflict them" (Giles, 2004, p. 230). Apprentices "gradually learn to domesticate the spirits so that they can control them and interact with them voluntarily as healers" (Giles, p. 230). In general, researchers (e.g., Bourguignon, 1989; Heinze, 1982; Krippner, 2000a) differentiate shamans from mediums because shamans initiate temporary spirit possession, retain volition during spirit possession, or temporarily suspend volition during spirit possession. In contrast, mediums do not exercise control over spirit possession.

Artists as Mediums

In the arts, *medium* has several meanings. Artists use different art *media* to make art. Oil painting is a *medium,* physically part of the art product and a kind of channel through which creative expression and artistic communication processes occur. Another kind of artistic *medium* refers to a subset of artists who believe they serve as mediums for spirits or gods.

Shaker artists, called "instruments," believed their songs, dances, paintings, and textile designs were direct gifts from the spirit world (Hyde, 1983). Believing their artists

were merely tools of God, who divined intent of the true creator, Shaker artwork was left unsigned.

The French poet and novelist, Victor Hugo (1802-1865) reported drawing and writing under the guidance of spirits. In poetry, Hugo (1888) reported the demanding and conflicted spiritual processes that spurred his creativity:

Victor Hugo listening to God.
Photographed by his son, Charles Hugo.

.

I feel that out of duty I write all these things
That seem, on the lurid, trembling parchment,
To issue sinisterly from the shadow of my hand.
Is it by chance, great senseless breath
Of the Prophets, that you perturb my thoughts?
So where am I being drawn
in this nocturnal azure?
Is it sky I see? Am I in command?
Darkness, am I fleeing? Or am I in pursuit?
Everything gives way.
At times I do not know if I am
the proud horseman or the fierce horse;
I have the scepter in my hand
and the bit in my mouth.
Open up and let me pass, abysses,
blue gulf,
Black gulf! Be silent, thunder!
God, where are you leading me?
I am the will, but I am the delirium.
Oh, flight into the infinite!
Vainly I sometimes say,
Like Jesus calling out "Lamma
Is the way still long? Is it finished,
Lord? Will you soon let me sleep?
The Spirit does what it will.
I feel the gusting breath
That Elisha felt, that lifted him;
And in the night I hear someone
commanding me to go!

James Merrill (2011) and his partner, David Jackson, went to a Ouija board to compose the apocalyptic epic poem, *The Changing Light at Sandover*. "Over the course of two decades" (Halpern, 2003, p. 47), Merrill and Jackson conducted séances using the Ouija board and transcribed the results. After Merrill thought his paranormal source of inspiration was exhausted, Merrill reportedly heard supernatural spirits who ordered him to keep writing – resulting in three prophetic volumes of poetry with a total of 560 pages. Within the epic itself, Merrill wrote:

> We had achieved, it seemed in the first glow,
> At last some kind of workable relation
> Between the two worlds. (p. 20)

Merrill (2010) was referring to relationships between consensual reality, the "one we feel is ours, and call the real" (p. 20) and the supernatural world. *The Changing Light at Sandover* simultaneously serves as an artistic medium of poetry, a record of occult activity, an intervening substance through which communication with readers occur, and an intended means of integrating consensual reality with a supernatural realm.

Mediumships: Discussion

In a sense, *The Changing Light at Sandover* is like a Tlingit mask with spirits represented as gazing in many directions that are placed near the mask's eyes to enable a shaman to see what is otherwise invisible. Merrill's deliberate use of the Ouija board as part of his creative process is more similar to a shamanic act of divination than spirit possession in that Merrill chose when to use the Ouija board to access information instead of losing control and becoming possessed.

However, Hugo's reported experience of spirit contact appears, based on data considered, to differ from Merrill. Hugo's poem reveals a conflicted experience of

polarities. Hugo reports less volition in his contact with spirits and their natures are a collision of duality. There is light and shadow, divine and sinister, being in control and being controlled, battle and surrender, sanity and insanity.

While Hugo's experiences can qualify him as a spiritual practitioner – and, in this way, seems to make him shamanlike – Hugo does not have control of all aspects of his purported contact with spirits. He may be more like a medium than like a shaman although, in some shamanic cultures, there is not a strict division between the two roles.

There is a long record of contemporary artists involved in activities intended to contact and channel spirits. Even in the modernist era, which valued positivism in many regards, many Abstract Expressionist painters believed in the existence of spirits (Caws, 2006, Weisberger, 1987).

Divination, mediumship, communication with spirits, and other kinds of potentially paranormal activities are found in subsets of contemporary artists as well as nonartists, that is, these spiritual activities are not limited to subsets of shamans or artists. Contemporary artists can use occult practices without shamanic intentions and without accessing content from shamanic cosmologies. Therefore, occult practices do not necessarily qualify as shamanism. Other constructs defining *shaman* must also be fulfilled to qualify an artist as a shaman.

Occult Passageways

The *occult* (2012) refers to "matters regarded as involving the action or influence of supernatural or supernormal powers or some secret knowledge of them." Inasmuch as spirits are a subset of alleged supernatural entities, any shamanic matter involving spirits

can be considered as an occult practice and belief. Occult beliefs can include ghosts. Many shamanic societies believe in ghosts who are spirits of the recently departed dead.

Passage to the Realm of Ghosts and Memories: *The Airport*
Denita Benyshek, photo montage.

In a report to the Smithsonian Institute, the anthropologist Franz Boas (1916) published a collection of Tsimshian myths. One tale involved a prince who pretended to be a shaman during childhood and then became a great shaman. The shaman-prince was described as going to a graveyard, crossing a bridge, and entering a village of ghosts. There, the shaman-prince retrieved the soul of a man who had recently died, brought the soul back to the Tsimshian village, and revived the dead man.

The shaman-prince became so successful at reviving the dead and preventing death that no one died and went to the ghost village. The ghosts who remained in the village hated the shaman-prince. The story continues, until the shaman-prince dies and becomes chief of the ghost village (Boas, 1916).

Shamans are often employed to investigate the cause of misfortune, which may be attributed to the actions of someone who recently died. Kim (2003) recounted a series of events that involved the beliefs and practices of a traditional shamanic community in Korea. Kim reported that, after a woman suffered an "inauspicious death, she had been doomed to wander as a ghost between two worlds, the world of the living and the world of the dead" (p. 39). The woman was held responsible for multiple misfortunes that befell her family after her death. Part of the family's solution involved hiring a shaman.

The ghost, or spirit, of the deceased woman was deliberately invited to possess the shaman (Kim, 2003). According to traditional belief, spirit possession of the shaman allowed the woman to speak to the family about her grievances. Such spirit possession as a means of communication is typical of South Korean shamanism whereas shamanic ecstasy is not (Kim). During the ritual, through possession of the shaman, the woman shared her resentment that her parents had not taken her to a doctor soon enough for treatment. A mock marriage ceremony was held for the woman because she had died without being married. The wedding involved two straw figures, the bride and a groom, who were dressed festively. After the ceremony, the figures were placed under a blanket for their wedding night (Kim). The ghost of the deceased woman was satisfied, entered the realm of the dead, and ceased causing misfortune.

How do contemporary artists interact with spirits and ghosts? In addition to the examples provided earlier in this chapter within the consideration of contemporary artists as mediums and divinators, there are artists who believe in the active power of ghosts and integrate work with ghosts into their artworks.

Louise Erdrich

The role of ghosts, culturally, historically, and as literary devices, deeply interests novelist Louise Erdrich. She explained the tension of her ethnic identity as woman with Chippewa and German American ancestors, with one branch of her family tree succeeding in almost exterminating, "ghosting," the other branch. Erdrich works with this history partly through the characters and actions of fictionalized ghosts who help represent how history haunts society (Brogan, 1998).

Erdrich uses ghosts "to bear witness to the destruction of traditional native cultures and the subsequent cultural invisibility of Native Americans" (Brogan, 1998, p. 31). Through the liminal passageway of fiction, Erdrich uses ghost characters to retrieve spirits. Within Erdrich's stories, ghosts figuratively live again in printed literature after being almost annihilated with the loss of oral traditions. Within the imaginal realm of fiction (see Corbin, 1964), Erdrich's ghosts repopulate land and resacralize nature, connect generations, communicate nostalgia, grieve loss, integrate change, reshape history, and attempt transcendence (Brogan). Mythic ghosts who survived the destruction of oral traditions, metaphoric ghosts that haunt survivors, ghosts of those that were killed, starved, or froze to death, these ghosts accompany Erdrich as she explored how how people construct reality, meaning, and connection with the past (Brogan).

Susan Hiller

Like Erdrich, Susan Hiller's artwork also explores constructions of reality, meaning, and historic connections. For Hiller, ghosts are metaphors representing how "Situations, ideas and experiences… haunt us collectively" and how "people construct their reality" (as cited in Buck, 2004, p. 35). Hiller uses cultural discards, fragments, and things that are invisible to most people but intensely important to a few" in a creative process that Hiller refers to as "working with ghosts" (Buck, p. 35).

Hiller is an American-born British artist who also works as a curator, editor, lecturer, and professor. Prior to Hiller's work as a conceptual artist, she trained as an anthropologist. "Her approach, and, indeed, much of her visual sensibility, extends from her research-based training: cataloguing, collecting, analyzing and presenting" (McLean-Ferris, 2011).

Hiller views psi phenomena as "social fact" revealed through "a quest for visionary, mystical experience, (altered states and) in-between areas such as dreams and visions and supposedly extraordinary powers, for instance ESP" (as cited in Buck, 2004. p. 35). Hiller also uses what she believes is automatic writing, telepathy, and communal dreamwork. Content arising from all of these paranormal, occult methods are accepted by Hiller without judgment or censorship and utilized in her creative process.

In an art review, Cumming (2011) first explained the historical and experiential basis for Hiller's work entitled *The J. Street Project.* As Cumming continued the review, she shared her personal experience of the photograph installation, culminating with a passionate question and statement:

> Three years ago, Hiller was walking through the centre of Berlin when she came across a most unexpected street sign. It read Judenstrasse - Jews' Street - as if

there were nothing odd about preserving the name of a place whose former residents had only so recently been killed. Hiller was shocked and amazed. She took a journey through Germany. Judendorf, Judenhof, Judenweg, Judengasse - it turned out there were 303 streets named after their sometime inhabitants.

Hiller photographed them all: in leafy lanes, in suburbia, in snowy towns and busy cities... The tension between these perfectly cheerful locations and the emotions invoked by the signs increases exponentially. Subtlety is everything. Hiller seems to present the evidence quite coolly, but this only allows an even greater pressure of feeling to build. The images are haunted by the signs: literally signs of people who are no longer there, whose lives were destroyed.

To witness them all together is to feel the past rise up...you want to shout 'Look! Don't you see them?' As if you were suddenly able to see ghosts.

A Seeing Ghost, Denita Benyshek, 2012, drawing, photo montage.

I Come to You because I Desire to *See*.

What can you see that I do not?

The door inside the frame.

How can you open my eyes?

Step through the door, across the threshold

separating you from you becoming.

Eyes that are closed to light?

Look deep down into the bottom of shadows.

Which direction do I look?

Behind you into yesterday.

Where do I find truth?

You must search for signs in every city and town.

How will I recognize these signs?

The signs are made of mirrors.

What is written on the signs?

Join the Tribe of Remembering.

I do not understand.

Will someone translate the message?

You must listen, ear against the mirror.

The mirror is cold.

Warm it with your breath, then with the shell of your ear.

The ocean breeze, warmth I hear.

The story is old.

The story is told,

Words of grandmother whistling around the farm house, calling her winter hounds.

Look! Do you see them?

Their tracks running through the museum,

past neat rows, the many enframed constructions of reality

unlocked with the keys of your eyes.

Denita Benyshek, March 24, 2012

You Must Listen, Ear Against the Mirror, Denita Benyshek, 2012, drawing, photo montage.

Occult Passageways: Discussion

Subsets of contemporary artists employ occult practices in their creative processes. Some of these practices are performed with the intent of establishing contact with spirits or ghosts. The data considered found that purported relationships and communications with supernatural entities, such as spirits or ghosts, played many roles in the creative processes of several contemporary artists. Some of these artists reported that supernatural beings offered guidance, assisted with access to visionary and mystical experiences, helped uncover important themes, and presented integrating experiences for the art audience. Ghosts also served as metaphors for forgotten cultural content and as literary devises in fiction.

Occult practices or incorporation of occult characters and themes into artwork can identify a contemporary artist who is either a spiritual practitioner, has roots in a traditional shamanic society, or, at a minimum, is interested in the occult. While such relationships with occult subjects and practices are somewhat similar to traits exhibited by some shamans, especially with regards to spirits or ghosts, occult practices are not sufficient to qualify a contemporary artist as a shaman.

Within this study's operationalization of *shaman, spiritual,* and *practitioner,* and based on the data considered, both Erdrich and Hiller qualify as spiritual practitioners. Within a comparison limited to spiritual practices, Hill and Erdrich both qualify as *partly shamanistic* – shamanlike in some regards – spiritual practitioners.

Both contemporary artists also created with the intent to benefit communities and individuals. Susan Hiller curated exhibits structured with the intent of inducing altered states in the art audience. Hiller also created art to bring attention to the shadow side of

societies. Louise Erdrich employed literary ghosts to heal individuals, cultures, and societies from the trauma of genocide, from ancestral roles as perpetrators and victims of violence. As illustrated in Figure 15, with regards to the properties *spiritual practitioner* and intent to *benefit the community and its members,* Erdrich and Hiller appear to fulfill both of these categories. Two "pieces of the puzzle," *spiritual practitioner* and *benefits to community and its members,* work together synergistically in the work of Erdrich and Hiller.

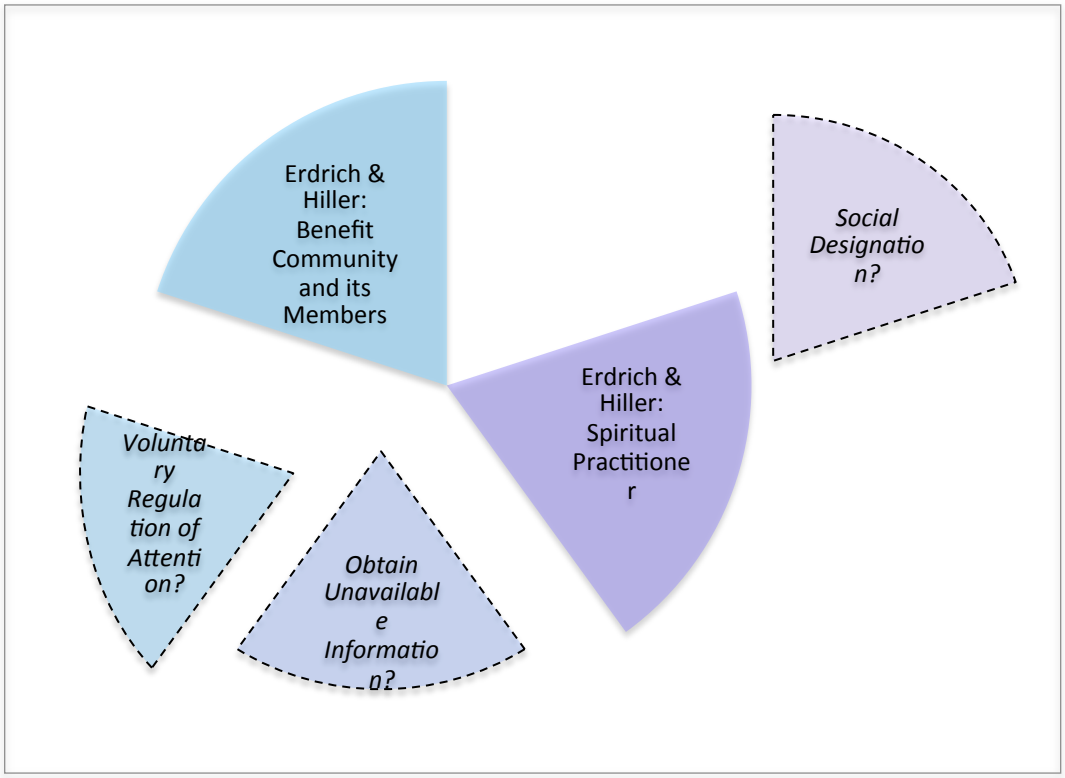


Figure 15. Artists Louise Erdrich and Susan Hiller fulfilled two constructs defining shaman through their spiritual practices and their intents to benefit their audiences and individual members of their audiences.

The presence of the occult in creative processes may identify a spiritual practitioner; however, any artist under consideration must fulfill *all* other necessary constructs defining *shaman,* such as intent to benefit community and its members, to

fully qualify as a shaman. How do Hiller and Erdrich compare to the defining constructs of *shaman*, namely social designation, voluntary regulation of attention, and obtaining information in ways not available to other members of their community?

Figure 16 presents a Venn diagram showing the relationships between occult practices, spirits in shamanic cosmologies, spirits as literary devices, and the work of Louise Erdrich and Susan Hiller.

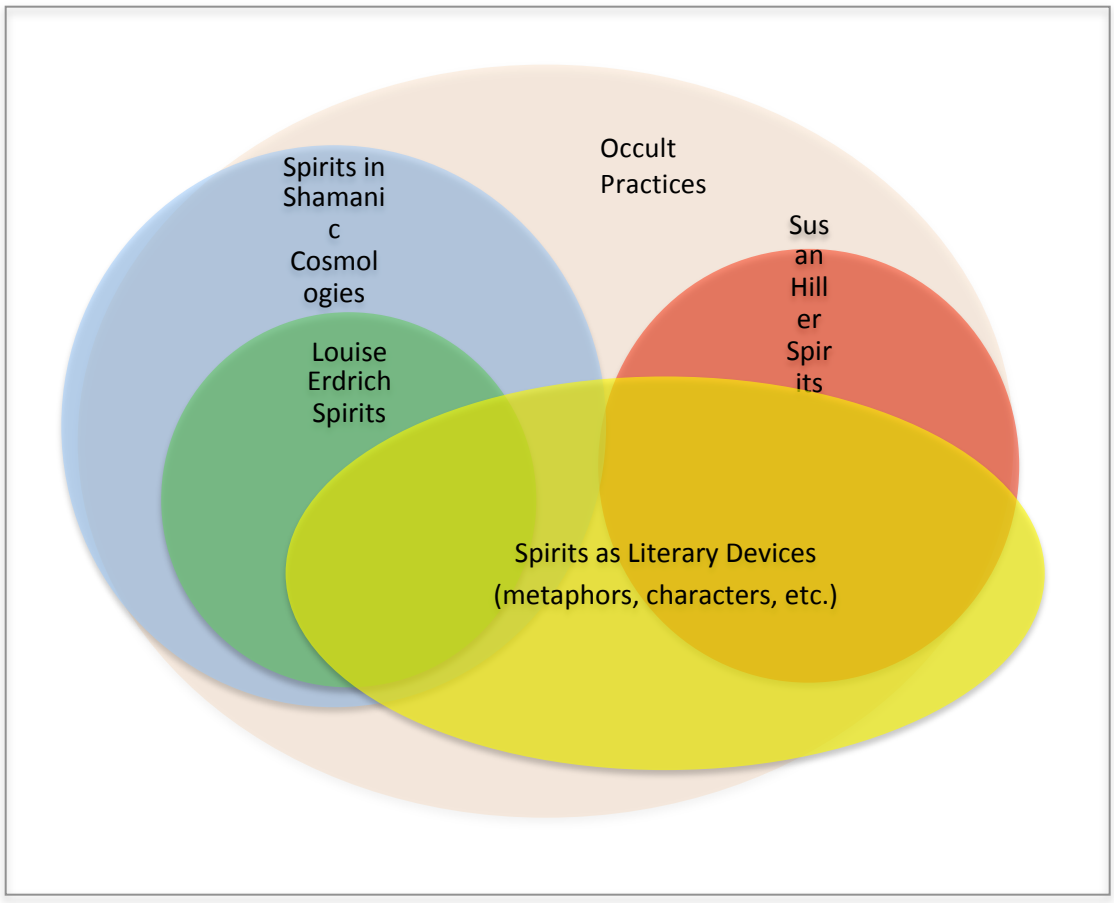


Figure 16. Both Louise Erdrich and Susan Hiller utilize spirits as artistic devices in their work. However, some of Louse Erdrich's spirits come from her ancestor's shamanic beliefs while Susan Hiller's spirits were found in nonshamanic societal beliefs and practices.

Although such data may exist, I did not find evidence of Erdrich or Hiller being socially designated as shamans. I did not look for data that indicated whether or not Erdrich and Hiller could obtain information in ways unavailable to their community. Likewise, I did not consider whether or not Erdrich or Hiller could voluntarily regulate their attention.

Erdrich's spirits are literary devices – which is also true of shamanic oral traditions that involve stories of spirits – and Erdrich's spirits come out of a traditional shamanic cosmology. Hiller's ghosts are not the kinds of spirits that are usually found in shamanic cosmologies, that is, specific ancestor spirits or nature spirits. Nonetheless, Hiller's ghosts are a kind of historical "ancestor" with past events metaphorically haunting the present.

Inspiration

Definitions of inspiration fall primarily into three categories: anatomical, spiritual, or cognitive. Inspiration can be part of the respiratory process, the physical act of drawing air into the lungs; a spiritual process, e.g. the taking in of a spirit or indicating the presence of an indwelling spirit which can be a "special immediate action or influence of the spirit of God (or of some divinity or supernatural being) upon the human mind or soul" (Inspiration, 2011); or, more generally, a cognitive process involving a metaphoric "breathing in or infusion of some idea, purpose, etc. into the mind; the suggestion, awakening, or creation of some feeling or impulse, esp. of an exalted kind" (Inspiration). *Inspiration* also refers to "a divine influence or action on a person believed to qualify him or her to receive and communicate sacred revelation" (Inspiration).

There is a long history linking divine inspiration, shamans, and artists. In Mongolian myth, a goddess gave power, through an eagle emissary, to a person who became the first shaman *and* the first artist. In alternate versions of the myth, the eagle was the first shamanic artist or the eagle mated with a woman and their son was the first shamanic artist. In the Mongolian creation myth, the vocations of artist and shaman were united, not separated.

Batbayar Gonchigdorj, of the Ataa Tenger Institute of Mongolian Shamanism Studies, told me "Shamanism is wholly the world of inspiration. And it is the expression of human world and inspiration world" (personal communication, March 21, 2010). Inspiration, which Westerners view primarily as a state of being, is seen as "a kind of spirit" (B. Gonchigdorj) in Mongolia. Gonchigdorj also shared that "inspiration is the agent of the secret world and human (shaman) is the agent of the human world. And shamanic artist connects these two worlds. So inspiration is spirit." Thus, in Mongolia, inspiration is simultaneously a spirit entity, a state of being, a state of spirit possession, and a means of channeling spirit. Inspiration is believed to channel spirit when the shamanic artist is contacted by a spirit, receives knowledge from a spirit, and then communicates this knowledge through art.

As noted earlier, Classical Greeks believed poets received inspiration through divine madness caused by a deity. Romantic poets told of receiving inspiration from spirits (Flaherty, 1992). S. Krippner (personal communication, 2006) wrote that inspiration is "the artist's analogue of spirit possession." The recipient of inspiration may experience divine or spiritual guidance, causing enlivening and exalting emotion.

When a seer receives spiritual insight, divine presence is often felt as white or golden light. Artists may visually represent this kind of insight as a halo, a surrounding aura, or an internal presence. To Matisse, such experiences may be described as enlightenment (Flam, 1994). Matisse (as cited in Flam) contrasted representational painters with enlightened artists:

> Most painters require direct contact with objects in order to feel that they exist, and can only reproduce them under strictly physical conditions. They look for an exterior light to illuminate them internally. Whereas the artist or the poet possesses an interior light which transforms objects to make a new world of them – sensitive, organized, a living world which is in itself an infallible sign of the Divinity, a reflection of Divinity.
>
> That is how you can explain the role of the reality created by art as opposed to objective reality – by its non-material essence. (p. 61)

The "belief in the inspired source of creativity…is, today, a tenet not held by many," noted Funk (2000, p. 55). However, Funk's personal encounters with numerous reports of numinous experience and non-ordinary states of inspiration led him to question rational and environmental theories regarding creativity. Funk (2000) argued in favor of considering the "non-ordinary states of mind that, to varying degrees, can be ascribed to transpersonal sources of inspiration" (p. 55).

While transcendence may be experienced at any developmental level or age, Funk believed "transpersonal experiences are more likely to occur to those at higher developmental levels since one's ego boundaries become ever more permeable and open to the numinous…." (Funk, 2000, p. 58). Funk commented," In the transpersonal view, people we label geniuses have the ability, some of the time at least, to access this transcendent consciousness" (p. 58). During mystical communion with the infinite, with spirit or the divine, the artist perceives "cosmic patterns existing beyond Newtonian space and time" (Funk, p. 59).

When artists access these "cosmic patterns" and channel numinosity into their works of art, then the audience is offered access to mystical, spiritual realms through works of art. Potentially, via art, members of the art audience could experience "cosmic patterns," numinosity, and other kinds of transpersonal realms; thus, also engaging in spiritual practices.

Ruth Richards, who is the chair of this dissertation, is a Harvard trained psychiatrist, psychologist, a leading edge researcher in creativity studies, and a devoted practitioner and teacher of Vietnamese Zen and Tibetan Buddhism as well as a student of many spiritual traditions. She recently stated, "I believe we all come to the greater truth from different directions, and find it more than useful to know about many world wisdom traditions" (Richards, personal communication, March 26, 2012).

Richards (2007b) integrated her studies of creativity with spirituality, editing the book *Everyday Creativity and New Views of Human Nature: Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Perspectives* for the American Psychological Association, in which she stated that creativity can be a "potential path of personal and even spiritual development" (p. 193).

Conversations with Earth

Aboriginal Mythic Consciousness and Songs

The Northern Territory, Arnhem Land Aboriginal songmaker and dancer, Leodardi, shared his spiritual source of inspiration:

> I don't make up these songs and dances. The spirits give them to me. Sometimes when I am out hunting I come to a certain place. Something in that place tells me to keep quiet. By and by I see the spirits come out and start singing and dancing…. I keep quiet. I catch that song. I catch that dance. I catch that painting. I come back to the camp and give this song, this dance, this painting to my people. (McLuhan, 1994, p. 47)

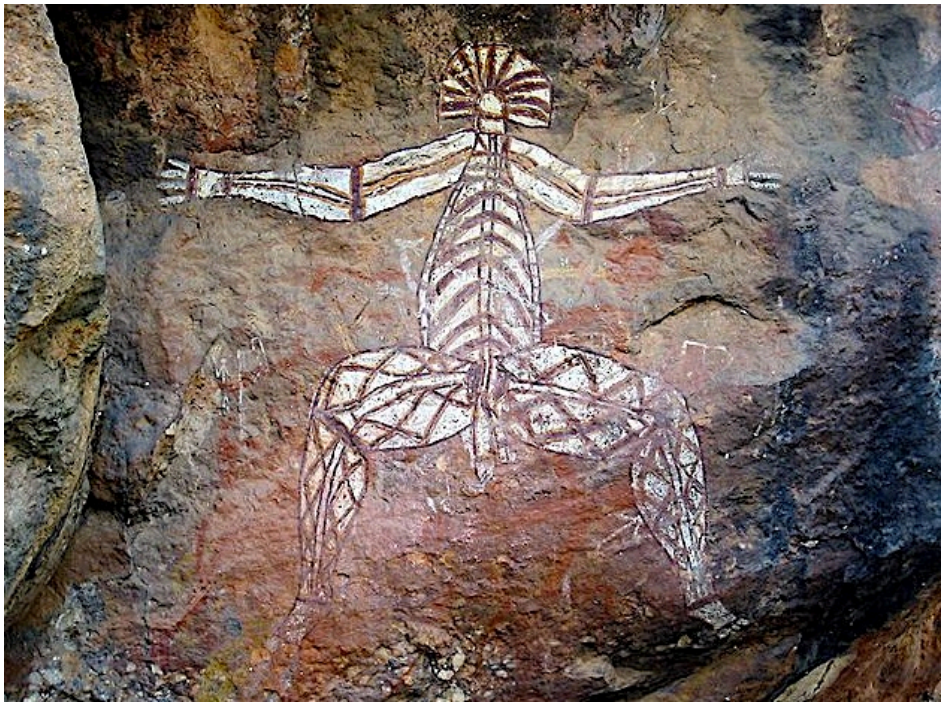
In this way, observed McLuhan (1994), Aboriginal art forms "re-collect the sacred forms of the inner world of mythic consciousness so that the singer, dancer and musician can engage in dialogue with 'country'… Where all the earth has the power to converse with him" (p. 47). In Aboriginal Australian cultures, artworks have a sacred life independent of those who sing it and those who listen to it. In addition, Aboriginal songs are "invested with singular power" and function as a "life source" (McLuhan, p. 48).

To the environment loved by the Aborigines, "singing is one expression of that profound affection. It keeps everything fertile, ensuring reciprocity between humankind and the natural and metaphysical worlds….Songs affirm the sacrality of life and numinous nature of the Aboriginal universe" (McLuhan, 1994, pp. 49-50). The goal of Aboriginal artists, who use traditional creative technologies, is to enter a state of conversation with the earth.

Uluru (Ayers Rock), Australia.

Jindyworobak Movement and Australian Poetry

Roland Robinson (1912-1992) was an Irish born poet, construction worker, and ballet dancer who resided in Australia. Robinson wanted to converse with the earth, but "the voice…was inarticulate, locked up in its landscapes and the creatures of those landscapes" (McLuhan, 1994, p. 83). When Robinson met Aboriginal storytellers and singers, including Alexander Vesper, Ethel Gordon, and David Carpenter, their tales were like keys that, in McLuhans's metaphor, "unlocked the voice" (p. 83) of the earth. There, Robinson felt he discovered a voice that spoke in service to society and the earth. Then, Robinson (see 1956, 1965, 1967) became the means through which Aboriginal stories were collected and published, providing a larger audience with glimpses of the Aboriginal world and dreamtime.



Namarrgon, lightning spirit-deity. Rock painting originally created c. 6000 B.C.E., in present day Kakadu National Park, Northern Territory, Australia.

Robinson's creativity extended into the political realm through his participation in the Jindyworobak (Jindy) Movement. This group of European Australian individuals promoted Aboriginal art, bringing attention to environmental degradation and prejudice, while also developing an Australian voice independent from Europe through adopting certain Aboriginal words and use of colloquial speech. From the Aborigine artists, the Jindies learned the importance of developing a related knowing to the natural world and an understanding of "the spirit of place" (Jindyworobak Movement, 2012).

Conversations with Earth: Discussion

Robinson benefitted from the Aboriginal ability to converse with the earth, to understand the spirituality of a singular place in a vast landscape, even incorporating Aboriginal words and concepts into his poetry. Metaphorically speaking, the Aborigines opened a door for Robinson through which he could access what was previously unavailable to him. These actions by Robinson could, arguably, be considered appropriation of Aboriginal culture. Yet, Robinson also opened a door for the Aborigines through which their stories were published in print; their visual works of art gained exhibits, audiences, collectors, and sales; and issues of environmental degradation and prejudice affecting Aboriginal peoples were brought to the forefront of awareness in Australia. Each group, the Aborigines and the Jindyworobak poets, contributed what they had in a mutual gift exchange.

Animism and Immaterial Spirits

Animism (2012) is the "attribution of conscious life to objects in and phenomena of nature or to inanimate objects" as well as the "belief in the existence of spirits separable from bodies." In societies with animistic beliefs, the consciousness of natural

phenomena, whether living or inanimate, is believed to exist as a property of a specific spirit. In a shamanic cosmology, there may be water spirits with each spring or lake possessing its own spirit. But, animals, plants, places, or other natural forms are not the only source of spirits. Spirits can also be immaterial, not only free floating like ghosts, but also "living" outside of an object until captured in form by an artist.

Animism is most often thought of as a belief that different things, whether natural or constructed by humans, are conscious and even, at times, possessing a soul or being the habitat of a spirit that is inextricably linked by the object. For example, many traditional cultures believe in gods of lightning, waterfall spirits, rock spirits, and island spirits. In Slavic mythology, there are *domovoi* (house spirits), and *rusalki* (mermaids or water nymphs), to name only a few. There can also be spirits, ghosts, or souls that are immaterial, such as *wilis* (maidens who died before they could marry, especially maidens who died of broken hearts from abandonment).

In shamanic cosmologies, spirit worlds are omnipresent and active. Spirits are generally not visible because spirits express "not the surface appearances of things but their inner nature" (Vitebsky, 2001, p. 18). In shamanic societies, spirits are understood as providing power, meaning, and true existence for objects. Such spirits or spirit power can be "seen" and experienced through an artistically crafted object.

Mande Blacksmith-Shamans and *Nyama*

Nyama, a free floating, ubiquitous, natural, and mystical force, is believed to fuel and empower all activities of traditional sub-Saharan Mande, or Bamana, shaman-blacksmiths (McNaughton, 1988*).* For these spiritual practitioners, *nyama* power is a prerequisite to all action and a by-product of every act. The Mande believe that, in

massive concentrations, *nyama* can be dangerous, even deadly. However, blacksmith shamanic practices harness this animistic power for productive purposes.

To the Mande blacksmith-shamans, the challenge of working iron demands great *nyama*. As they create, they believe that each hammer blow directs and implants additional *nyama* into metal, skillful and lengthy construction captures more *nyama* as they construct great power reservoirs. The blacksmith-shamans, and their communities, believed that *nyama* was carried by utilitarian objects such as lamps, tools such as spear blades, and ritual objects such as sacred staffs. Mande blacksmiths qualify as archetypal artists who, as defined by d'Azavedo (1973), maintain the bridge linking sacred and secular. By capturing *nyama* spirit in the understood form of iron objects, the blacksmiths demonstrate the overlapping union between the spheres of shamanism and artistic creativity.

Constantin Brancusi and Folk Belief

Constantin Brancusi was born in a Romanian village. As a young man, he walked to Paris, carrying his peasant roots. While urban sophisticates scorned folk art, Brancusi nurtured and sustained his relationship with peasant life through woodcarving. Many folk cultures experience magical consciousness similar to the magical thinking evident in shamanic cultures.

I am familiar with how the magical thinking of folk cultures influenced designs for architecture, garments, and other utilitarian objects partly due to my ethnic background as a Czech-Moravian. I gained additional knowledge when I taught at the Rimsky-Korsakov College of Art in Pskov, Russia, toured the Кижский Погост (Kizhi

Pogost) open air museum of more than 80 historical wooden buildings on the Island of Kizhi in Karelia, and met with contemporary folks artists in Russian Siberia.

Magical intent can be seen, for example, on wooden peasant homes in Russia where elaborately carved window frames were intended to serve as prayers and barriers protecting inhabitants from evil spirits and harm.

Saint Petersburg children in front of a house with elaborately-carved window frames, near Leningrad, Branson DeCou, photographer, hand-tinted glass slide, 1831.

Courtesy, Special Collections, University Library, University of California Santa Cruz.
Branson DeCou Digital Archive.

Similarly, in the traditional folks arts of Asia (Seattle Art Museum, 1996) and Europe, collars, cuffs, and hems on garments were elaborately painted, dyed, appliqued, embroidered, woven, beaded, or knitted with “ornamental” designs intended to protect

the person wearing the garment from evil spirits that might enter these openings and harm whomever is wearing the garment. The visual "prayers" were also placed on the backs of the garments, an especially vulnerable place to attack.

Above and below: Moravian *kroj* (folk costume) at festival in Uherském Hradišti, 2011. Anonymous photographer.

Close up detail of elaborate Czech folk beadwork,
Hans Janos Benyshek van Wyk, photographer.
Used with permission.

The designs, frequently of such dense patterns and saturated colors so as to be like visions or hallucinations, are often based on plant motifs, intended to provide a kind of energized ecstasy, radiant joy, and growth-based symbolism that was believed to evoke the power of life itself.

Romanian folk culture provided Brancusi with similar animist-infused content with regards to capturing an immaterial power or spirit in art. His sculptures embodied the spirit world in abstract form. Brancusi spoke of portraying a fish, not through

illustrative depiction, but by expressing "the flesh of its spirit" (Shanes, n.d.). The artist believed "what is real is not the external form but the essence of things" (Wood, 1999, pp. 341-342). These statements reveal the artist's belief in an immaterial spirit that, like the Mande immaterial *nyama* power, can be captured in a sculptural form.

Brancusi designed a large scale World War I memorial commemorating the bravery of the "old people, women, boy scouts, and children" (Korp, 2008) who successfully defended a bridge despite the loss of over 1,000 lives. There are a series of monumental sculptures, *Table of Silence, Alley of Seats, Avenue of Heroes, Kiss Gate,* and *Endless Column.* The entire monument is symbolic, representing heroes crossing a river into the land of the dead past mourners seated in silence:

> The earth claims its own, as she must. The corporeal body returns to the mother, cells divide; from the rot of the flesh, new life springs. The soul, blessed by ritual offerings at the sacrificial altar as in the Romanian Orthodox funeral Mass, journeys onward. The soul is female; anima travelling in the person of beautiful Malestra, the great bird, the golden soul bird. She flies to the sun, her solar direction set for her by the grave post. The post is an axis mundi holding up the sky – a tri-level terrestrial connection of underworld grave to solar rebirth. (Korp, 2008)

The *Endless Column* is a grave post with each module the height of an adult and based on the Golden Section. "At sunrise," wrote Korp (2008), "the column appears like a shaft of infinite light almost as if from its apex Malestra can fly straight to the sun." The column provoked this response in a viewer:

> It speaks of indestructible creativity, a tower of beauty that will never be brought down, power without arrogance, strength without violence, body without weight. It finds beauty in repetition and seems to touch on something lost and impossible, a magic geometry, the key to the universe. Something you knew once, if you could only put it in words. (Jones, 2004)

Brancusi provided the souls with a passageway to the after life. Brancusi also intended to care for the souls of survivors and visitors to the monument, providing a

series of sculptural forms that invite the art audience to witness, participate in grief, and experience giving up their loved ones to the sun. Here, as in Romanian pagan folk belief, the sun is animated with spirit, a primary deity in Slavic mythology.

The column is approached through *Kiss Gate.* The title refers to an earlier sculpture, *The Kiss.* In this small sculpture, Brancusi used two concentric ovals to indicate the eyes of lovers, merged in gaze. This ultimate act of seeing, where boundaries dissolve, became a central motif of the monument.

The Endless Column, Constantin Brancusi, 1938, Tg-Jiu, Gorj – Romania. Emilian Robert Vicol, Photographer, 2011, used with permission.

The gate's symbolic motifs also referenced traditional Romanian gate-posts, carved with protective designs and indicating "a passage from an impure place to a better place" (Korp, 2008).

Kiss Gate, Constantin Brancusi, 1938,
Tg-Jiu, Gorj –Romania.
Emilian Robert Vicol, Photographer, 2011,
used with permission.

For Brancusi, the gate created a liminal zone where one enters another life. The gate joined male and female, in a loving monument to peace, a passageway via the ecstasy of sexuality, and a means of transcendence. Simultaneously, *Kiss Gate* also represents the celestial marriage that, in Romanian folk belief, occurs after someone's death. This makes rebirth of a soul possible so that the soul can ascend to the sun.

Brancusi's war memorial also works with immaterial spirit, specifically the souls of common people who fought bravely and died in battle. But, instead of capturing the spirit-essence of these heroes in material form, as Brancusi did with birds, for example, Brancusi created objects that the souls could interact with. In as sense, instead of being depicted as things in products of creativity, these immaterial spirits are in the "unoccupied" spaces between things.

Brancusi maintained the immaterial quality of souls by not depicting souls in the war monument. Instead, there is a passageway for the souls to travel, from sculpture to sculpture, and finally up the column to the sun. Brancusi's work is intended to help souls of the deceased "cross over" while also continually reminding the viewer of the existence of these souls and what they sacrificed when embodied as humans.

Liminal Zones

Liminal zones, such as *Kiss Gate* or *Endless Column,* are thresholds and places where people experience transition. Hansen (2005) wrote of "liminal persons, phenomena, and events [that] tend to blur boundaries, upset classification schemes, and foster ambivalence and ambiguity. Such conditions are dangerous, but they can also be a source of supernatural power" (p. 3).

For us, as members of the art audience, works of art can also function as liminal zones where we cross into different realms or states of consciousness. "Liminal zones mediate ordinary reality from imaginal reality," wrote S. Krippner (personal communication, June 19, 2012), "a parallel universe to which both shamans and some artists have access."

***Mundus Imaginalis* (Imaginal Realm)**

Art-engaged experiences informed Henri Corbin (1903-1978), Islamic scholar, theologian, and gifted translator, during his modeling of the *mundus imaginalis,* also known as the imaginal realm (Corbin, 1964). Intellectually, Corbin the scholar was informed by constructs of material and supernatural realities represented in works of art, specifically mystical, visionary tales from ancient Persia. When Corbin, as a member of the art audience, read a story populated by supernatural beings, a symbol became a doorway that carried Corbin across the threshold and into a visionary realm. Thus, Corbin not only read *about* visionary, supernatural realms, Corbin also *directly experienced* these realms.

Corbin (1964) wrote, "it is a matter of entering, passing *into the interior* and, in passing into the interior, of finding oneself, paradoxically, *outside"* (p. 4) of consensual, material, sensate reality. "The relationship involved is essentially that of the external, the visible, the exoteric… and the internal, the invisible, the esoteric" or, to simply describe the essence of these two realms, "the natural world and the spiritual world" (Corbin, p. 4).

But, when the soul of someone passed from the natural realm into the spiritual realm:

> An odd thing happens: once this transition is accomplished, it turns out that henceforth this reality previously internal and hidden, is revealed to be enveloping, surrounding, containing what was first of all external and visible, since by means of *interiorization,* one has *departed* from that *external* reality. (Corbin, 1964, p. 7)

Corbin's experience showed him the intermediate world between external, material reality and spiritual realms:

> The world of the Image, *mundus imaginalis*: a world as ontologically real as the world of the senses, a world that requires a faculty of perception belonging to it, a faculty that is a cognitive function, a *noetic* value, as fully real as the faculties of sensory perception or intellectual intuition. (Corbin, 1964, p. 7)

In the imaginal realm, one discovers that:

> Henceforth, it is spiritual reality that envelops, surrounds, contains the reality called material. That is why spiritual reality is not 'in the *where*.' It is the '*where*' that is in it. Or, rather, it is itself the '*where*' of all things; it is, therefore, not itself in a place, it does not fall under the question '*where*?' (Corbin, 1964, p. 7)

Shamanic journeys can also be evoked by or taken through images and metaphors. Noel (1997) identified an imaginal reality of subjective experience where shamans work, further explained by Winkelman (2000) as operating through a "focus on internal visual imagery [that] provides an internal experiential focus, a figure-ground cognitive reversal that enhances the primacy of the internal imagetic reality to the degree that it provides an alternate experience to the external world" (pp. 85-85).

Perhaps the travel of artists through images, stages in the creative process, and levels of consciousness is synonymous with shamanic flights to other worlds. Riding upon the horse of color, Cezanne felt he entered a lower realm, reportedly stating:

> A painting is an abyss in which the eye is lost. All these tones circulate in the blood. One is revivified, born into the real world, one finds oneself, one becomes the painting. To love a painting, one must first have drunk deeply of it in long draughts. Lose consciousness. Descend with the painter into the dim tangled roots of things, and rise again from them in colors, be steeped in the light of them. (Gasquet as cited in Milner, 1950/2010, p. 27)

Cezanne descended into the abyss of the underworld, to view not the beauty of buds, leaves, or branches, but in search of tangled roots. He saw what is beneath appearances. In the ecstasy of his seeing, mystical unification occured. The boundary dissolved between Cezanne and the painting, resulting in a transformation from

dimness, to color, to light. The painting functioned as a mother through which Cezanne metaphorically experienced being reborn – a shamanlike process.

Animism and Immaterial Spirits: Discussion

Corbin's (1964) based his model of the imaginal realm on a scholarly exegesis of spiritual and visionary works of literature from ancient Persia, integrated with personal spiritual experiences catalyzed and structured by these stories. Perhaps the imaginal realm metaphorically represents some realms visited by shamans and spiritual artists. Ultimately, the imaginal realm may be where spiritually advanced artists live continually while simultaneously also living in the material world. From the imaginal realm, artists might obtain knowledge of supernatural beings and/or an existence that is mystical, unified, all encompassing, transcending, and eternal.

This knowledge can then be represented in spiritual works of art such as visionary stories, Brancusi's war memorial, or Mande Blacksmith ritual objects. These inspirited objects then serve as limens or thresholds for art audiences and shamanic communities, connecting the imaginal realm with sensate, consensual reality, and providing access for groups and individuals who are capable of crossing the threshold. In this way, the souls of art audience members and ritual participants gain access to the imaginal realm and its mysteries.

As seen in the pie chart of Figure 17, the Mande blacksmith-shamans fulfill all constructs defining *shaman.* All pieces of the "shaman pie" are present, so to speak. Traditional Mande believe in *nyama,* a spiritual power that is initially immaterial but which can be captured during a creative process within finely crafted iron objects by their blacksmith-shamans.

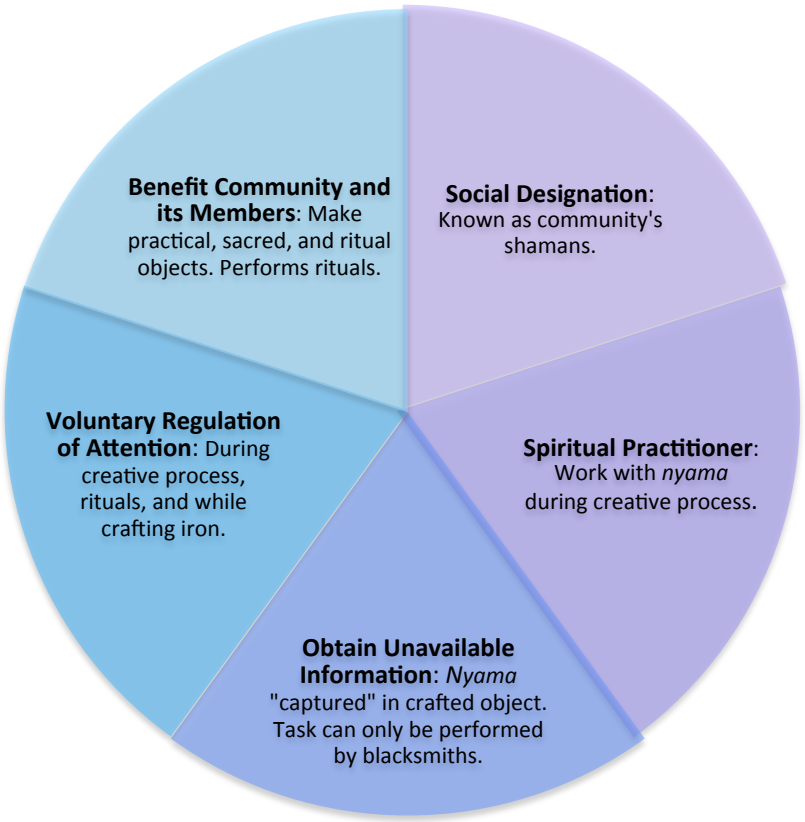


Figure 17. Mande blacksmith-shamans fulfilled all defining constructs of *shaman*.

The imaginal and supernatural realms are reportedly accessed by shamans through voluntary regulation of attention, visions, rituals, and purported interaction with spirits, journeying, paranormal experiences, divination, etc. Shamanic apprentices receive training on presenting their visions so that their interpretations conform to societal concepts of the *mundus imaginalis* and techniques for creating vivid experiences for the community (Noll, 1985).

> Key to trainers' [i.e., masters of shamanism] evaluative statements is an interest in concrete detail that can serve to increase the verisimilitude of the report for an audience. The trainers also instruct the neophyte on how to recall the vision, so that the shaman can summon forth a past vision at will for cogitation or

> recounting. These powerful visions then become part of the shaman's own arsenal for describing the spiritual world and conveying its needs to the community. By listening to the shaman's accounts, the community in turn sees its view of the supernatural confirmed and is encouraged to "remember" the sacral world by reenacting it in specific rituals. (DuBois, 2009, pp. 162-163)

Conceivably, spiritual artists might also master recollection of visions or visits to the imaginal realm and also master their artistic craft to better represent the imaginal realm to the art audience. In response, audiences and communities undertake their own creative journey, remembering what was torn apart, and entering the sacred world. Rituals, like experiences of art, provide a somewhat structured experience with a beginning and an end. The participant or audience member is taken across a threshold, given an experience, and then led out across another threshold.

The data considered on Brancusi revealed the following:

- Social Designation: No data found regarding Brancusi being socially designated as a shaman.
- Spiritual Practitioner: Yes, due to his intent to capture the spiritual essence of something in a sculpture or due to his creation of a place where souls or spirits could complete their journey from earth to heaven.
- Obtained Unavailable Information: Brancusi might obtain information that is unavailable to many other people due to his animistic beliefs, background in folk culture, creative process, and access to the imaginal realm. Additional research is required to answer this question.
- Voluntary Regulation of Attention: Examples of Brancusi voluntarily regulating his attention was not found in the data considered. Voluntary regulation of

attention is not the focus of this chapter. However, one could argue that different stages in the creative process are evidence of voluntarily regulated attention.

- Benefit the Shaman's Community and its Members – or – Benefit the Artist's Audience and its Members: Yes. Brancusi created the war memorial to benefit the inhabitants, living or dead, of Tg-Jiu as well as anyone who's life was affected by war. More broadly, Brancusi's memorial could also serve an audience member who suffered loss or grief.

After considering the foregoing, based on the data used, the Mande blacksmith-shamans completely fulfill all defining constructs of *shaman.* However, like Louise Erdrich and Susan Hiller, Constantin Brancusi only fulfills two constructs of *shaman,* namely *spiritual practitioner* and providing *benefits to the community and its members,* based on the data considered. Therefore, until further research is performed, Brancusi qualifies as a *shamanistic artist* – shamanlike with regards to being a spiritual practitioner and providing benefits to others.

According to the operationalized definition of *shaman,* benefits provided to the community and its members result from information obtained in ways unavailable to the community. Although considered separately thus far, the defining constructs of *shaman* work together synergistically. Therefore, it is likely that Brancusi obtained information to benefit the war monument's audience and, perhaps, the souls who were memorialized in their transition to an imaginal or supernatural realm.

As shown in Figure 18, data considered regarding Brancusi did not confirm that he fulfilled all defining constructs of *shaman.*

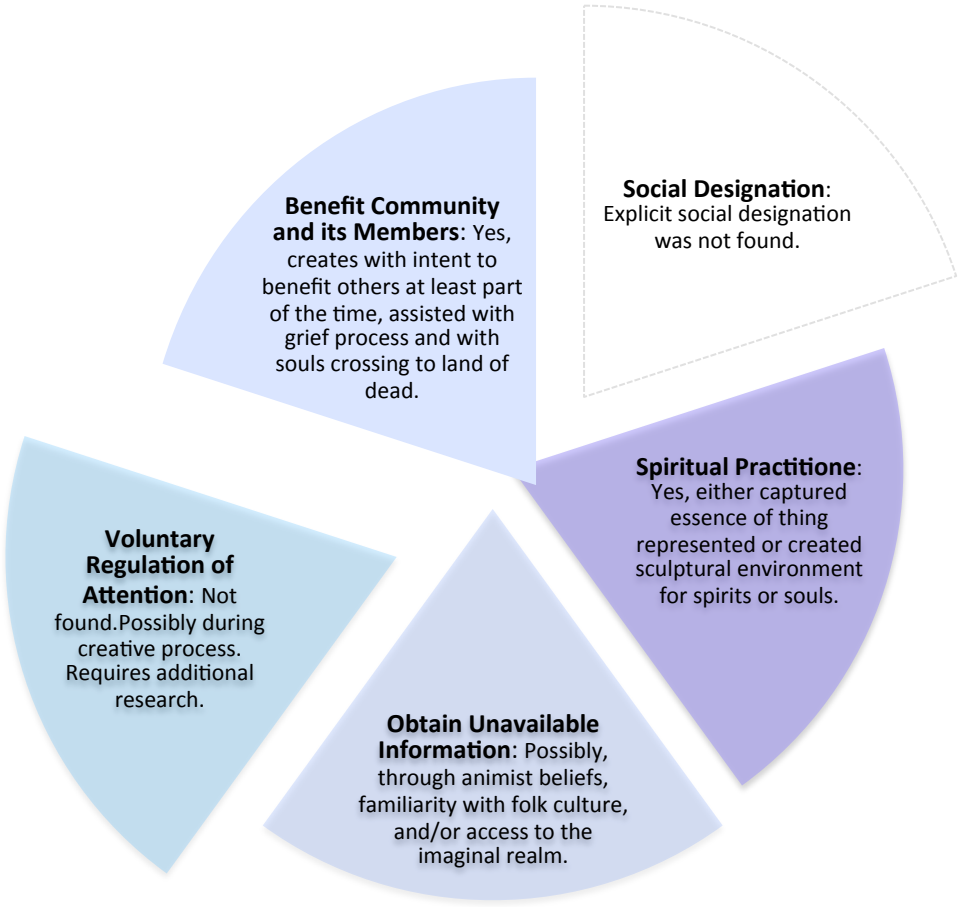


Figure 18. A comparison of Constantin Brancusi to constructs defining *shaman*. While Brancusi can be considered a spiritual practitioner and did create sculpture to benefit communities and individuals, Brancusi was not found to be a socially designated shaman. Other constructs might be present.

Ritual

Within most shamanic belief systems, spirits, those "extraordinary forces, entities, or beings whose behavior in an alternative reality affects individuals and events in our ordinary world" (B. Tedlock, 2005, p. 21) could be addressed, appeased, and activated through "actions or rituals performed in ordinary reality [that] can lead to effects in the

alternative sphere" (B. Tedlock, p. 21). In turn, the directed actions of spirits are "expected to lead to practical, observable results" (Krippner, 2000b, p. 208).

Masks of Tlingit Shamans

Among the Tlingit of southeast Alaska, there is a large population of spirits, with specific shaman-spirit relationships established partly based on relationships to nature, anatomy, magical objects, clan, and caste.

Tlingit Octopus (squid) mask possibly representing subsidiary spirits. Unknown maker. Ethnological Museum, Berlin, Germany. Collected 1881. Public domain photograph, wikimedia.org.

To the Smithsonian Institute, Swanton (1904-1905) reported:

> According to Katishan, the spirits that came to Raven [clan] shamans had to be distinct from those that came to Wolf [clan] shamans. The prominence of sea spirits, such as killer whales, among the helpers of shamans is noticeably less than among the Haida. The sun spirit belonged to the KîkSA'dî, while the sea spirits came partly to Raven, partly to Wolf shamans....
>
> It would appear that, taking the people of the north Pacific coast as a whole, shamanism reached its climax among the Tlingit. At all events their shamans were more powerful and influential and more dreaded than those among the Haida. The latter appear the have recognized this and affected to bring many of their spirit helpers from the Tlingit country. But while the Haida shaman personated only one spirit at a time, and usually performed without a mask, each Tlingit shaman was guarded by a number of helpers and possessed a number of masks. Besides depicting a principal figure on each mask, there were usually one or more smaller ones which represented subsidiary spirits... and these were frequently supposed to strengthen special features or faculties of the shaman. Thus the figures of spirits round the eyes were to strengthen the sight and so enable the shaman to discover hostile spirits.... (pp. 465-466)

In this Tlingit octopus or squid mask, the tentacle suckers are aligned on both cheeks while the row of small figures carved like in a band around the forehead may represent subsidiary spirits.

The small figures gaze in 180 degrees, perhaps intended to increase the mask wearer's ability to see spirits and realms unavailable to the community. In this Tlingit octopus or squid mask, tentacle suckers are aligned on both cheeks while the row of small figures carved in a band around the forehead may represent subsidiary spirits. The small figures gaze out in 180 degrees, perhaps to increase the mask wearer's ability to see spirits and realms unavailable to the community.

Tlingit shamans use the ritual process of wearing masks to remove "the shaman far enough from secular order so that his spiritual potency is adequate for the tasks he must perform," Jonaitis (2006, p. 366) recounted. Within the Tlingit's highly ordered, strictly structured, and rule bound traditional society, the shaman "effectively disregards all the rules of social order," becoming "several different beings" with distinct identities. In another example of how shamans dissolve boundaries and create a non-dual way of being, the shaman moves through a progression of masks during which the boundaries between opposites, between man and woman, human and animal, and cosmological levels, "so crucial to profane order" (Jonaitis, p. 366) are blurred. The shaman becomes a young-old, malevolent-benevolent, near-far, dead-alive, Tlingit-foreign, woman-man, human-animal living on land-sea-air.

The first set of four masks function as liminal zones that take the shaman away from the social order and possibly provide sufficient power to achieve a cure. If this empowered, socially removed state is not sufficient, the shaman will wear another series

of four masks, traveling further from societal rules and order while simultaneously travelling further into sacred realms (Jonaitis, 2006) during complex rituals.

For Émile Durkheim (1858-1917, 1915), ritual served as a means of empowerment, “the believer” feels capable of enduring or conquering “the trials of existence” (p. 416). Rituals are prescribed, stylized, symbolic, imaginative, ordered, and goal-directed, often involving a mythological, usually existential, theme with deep meaning for participants (Achterberg, Dombrowe, & Krippner, 2007). In shamanic societies, rituals often invoke and call forth or communicate with different kinds of spirits.

Shamanic rituals meet communal and individual attachment needs, fulfilling fundamental human needs (Winkelman, 2000) while also “enhancing social support systems and group identity” (Winkelman, p. 257) and facilitating healing through “shamanic practices” with “biological consequences” (Winkelman, p. 200). As an integrative activity, ritual links emotions, myths, cultural symbols, and physiological responses including opioid release and endocrine system functioning (Winkelman). Not only is greater integrity achieved within individuals, rituals also result in a group that is synchronized psychologically and biologically (Frecska & Kulcsar, 1989).

Some contemporary artists use ritual, and its many theatrical qualities, as their primary artistic medium. For some of these artists, rituals are performed for spiritual purposes with intent to heal.

Lauren Raine: Masks of the Goddess

Demeter/Ceres, Lauren Raine © 2002, mixed media mask.

After studying mask art in Bali, artist Lauren Raine (n.d.-b) "created 30 masks of Goddesses from spiritual traditions around the world for the 20th Annual Spiral Dance in San Francisco."

Raine's (2009) creative process worked collaboratively with dancers who wore the masks. Their creative processes integrated multiple magical, mythical, and polytheistic spiritual beliefs and practices:

> At our first meeting, I put the masks in a circle, asking members to choose a mask that spoke to them. Then, with drumming and guided meditation, we shared a shamanic journey. Afterwards, by discussing our visions, we determined which members of the group felt strongly called to "dance with a Goddess." Another way of looking at this process was to discover which masks 'wanted to be activated.'
>
> In traditional cultures, tribes not only petition the Gods to speak, but sometimes the Gods themselves express a desire to be present in various oracular ways. In contemporary Santeria practice, for example, dancers volunteer to be possessed by deities as a form of community blessing. Masks, dance and ritual are viewed as co-creative, a means for the invisible world to briefly enter our own. (Raine, 2009, para. 34)

Victor Turner's (1975) book, *Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society* inspired Raine (2009) who explained how "Masks can aid the traveler by performing the function of 'threshold tools' or 'limens'" (para. 40); moreover:

> Authentic ritual is what anthropologist Victor Turner described as 'communitas': a collaboration between participants and a larger, invisible, extended community. If it has potency, ritual, like art, can include participants in a conversation whose mythological roots go far back into the past, and forward into the imaginal future. To enter fully into ritual space is to shift consciousness in order to undertake a mythic pilgrimage. (para. 40)

One of the dancers, Anne Weller, felt herself cross a threshold - perhaps into the imaginal world – through wearing and activating a mask. Weller then embarked on a personal mythic journey during the spiritual practice involved with creating the performance:

> I felt ridden by the Dark Goddess when I undertook my role. But the work was ultimately impersonal. I was a brief vessel for an immense archetypal intelligence

> manifesting within the drama we created. And yet, embodying the Dark Goddess did bring personal change. You can't work with sacred theatre and not be changed in some way. I found myself confronting daily those aspects of myself that were just not useful. I was being re-constructed, whether I was aware of it or not, to better serve Her in the world. Which meant better serving myself. That's how I look at it. The little overlay of how I imagined myself, which had never been very effective, was now utterly obvious to me. My authentic power began to manifest. (Raine, 2009, para. 43)

Later, Raine (2009) offered the collection "as contemporary *Temple Masks,* making them available to those who wished to use them for dance, story and ritual devoted to the Divine Feminine." These masks and performances, collectively, were known as "The Masks of the Goddess Project." From 1999 C.E. to 2008 C.E., the Goddess masks appeared in numerous performance rituals across the United States, each time brought to life by different communities.

One of the performance directors, Manna Youngbear, was part Cherokee. Youngbear invited Christy Salo to dance Selu (Corn Mother), a major Cherokee deity – even though Raine had not made a Corn Mother mask. But, Salo (n.d.) was assisted by what she felt to be synchronous events. A confluence of events, perhaps influenced by converging currents in the *Zeitgeist,* occurred.

In a bookstore, a book selected at random opened to an article about Corn Maiden.

The illustration was by a friend Salo had met years ago.

Salo met a Hopi woman who gave the dancer "300 year old corn meal" (Salo, n.d., para. 3).

Meanwhile, Raine (n.d.-a) attended a public event:

> As I sat on the floor, I found myself absorbed by a vision. When I closed my eyes I saw a Native American woman dancing. I opened my eyes, and closed my eyes again, and still she danced in my imagination, ears of multi-colored corn in her

> hands. When I returned to my studio, I made a mask with corn on each side of the face. (para. 6)

Raine (n.d.-a) continued:

> I had been reading about Black Elk, the great Lakota teacher... [who] prophesied a 'hoop of the nations': a great circle, composed of many interlocking circles, that would someday come to be. A Rainbow Tribe. I painted a rainbow on the mask's forehead, because the children of America are now of all colors. (para. 7)

Then, just before the performance, Raine (n.d.-a) discovered that Salo, who would be dancing Corn Mother, was planning to perform without a mask. But, thanks to Raine's vision and creativity, there was a Corn Mother mask. The performers consecrated the mask with the corn meal.

> As we did, a flash of light went off in the room! At first we thought it was a light bulb that blew out. But no electric lights had been turned on in that room. We looked at each other amazed, and felt the presence of Corn Mother. (Salo, n.d., para. 5)

The collaborative creators interpreted events through mythic metaphors and a process in which their understanding of ancestry, vision, imagination, spirituality, intention, collaboration, community, openness, synchronicity, psi, myth, generativity, and integrative consciousness – all creatively contributed to an artist providing a Corn Mother mask to a dancer working under a Native American directing a performance-ritual presenting visions of racial harmony and reverence for the Earth.

Christy Salo (n.d.) wrote a poem that spoke of creative origins and generativity, recited during her dance:

> Corn Mother – Selu
>
> I emerged from shafts of the first sacred corn:
> From Me, and My Husband
>
> Kanati the Hunter
> the First People are descended.

I return again in each ear of corn.
I dance in the summer fields.
I dance the sun and the earth.
I dance for all children.

I dance for the rainbow.
I dance for you.

For Raine (n.d.-a), "even as the forces of modernism destroy so much of the natural balance, Corn Mother offers us still another chance to weave our way back into good relationship" (para. 4) with Earth Mother. In a statement indicating Raine's generative development, she then stated, "I believe we also are 'seeded', given kernels to nurture us, to pass on, and to preserve" (para. 4).

Another dancer, Katherine Josten, founder of the Global Art Project, wrote of the artists' task of participating in social and spiritual transformation, dissolving boundaries and creating states of balance and nonduality:

> The work of our group is not to re-enact the ancient goddess myths, but to take those myths to their next level of evolutionary unfolding. Artists are the myth makers. It is time for us to create the next chapter, to join the energies of Goddess and God. Time for a reconciliation of that which is within and without. The integration of male and female must occur in order to bring balance to the earth and human consciousness. A dialogue needs to occur so the pain of both may be brought to light and transmuted. (Josten as cited in Raine, 2009, para. 32)

The audience also became physically involved as the dancer representing Spider Woman dissolved another boundary. She moved physically past conventional theatre's invisible "fourth wall" that separates performer from audience and wove a web of thread, joining together everyone who held the threads of the web.

After the last performance, presented at the Muse Community Arts Center, the performers scattered the biodegradable threads in the desert, "symbolically extending our web and its blessing beyond our small community to a greater world" (Raine, 2009, para. 39). Finally, "as part of the Global Art Project, photographs, letters and a video about

Restoring the Balance were sent to the AFEG-NEH-MABANG Traditional Dance Company, in Limbe, Republic of Cameroon" (Raine, para. 39):

> Lastly, our invitation included the hope that these cross-cultural 'faces of the Mother' would emphasize the global significance of our event, and the universal need to heal the degradation of the feminine. After rehearsals, the dancers took the masks home to keep on their personal altars as spirit vessels. (para. 31)

Amaterasu Omikami portrayed by Manna Youngbear, dancer,
from Masks of the Goddess, Lauren Raine © 2004. Used with permission.

Ritual: Discussion

The shamanic belief in spirits partakes in magical thinking wherein actions in consensual reality are believed to affect, and be affected, by spirits. Shamans conduct rituals in part to structure interactions with spirits for the benefit of communities and

individuals. Rituals are believed to create a liminal space with the spirit world. In addition, ritual participation causes physiological responses that synchronize participants psychological and biologically as well as co-creating a sense of community.

Lauren Raine created a series of rituals in collaboration with other performers. The data considered on Raine found her performance-ritual, *Masks of the Goddess,* compared to constructs defining *shaman* as follows:

- Social Designation: No evidence found regarding Raine being socially designated as a shaman.
- Spiritual Practitioner: Yes. See Table 13 below for further analysis.
- Obtained Unavailable Information: Yes, through study of anthropology, mask making, ritual structures, collaboration, creative processes, magical thinking rehearsal techniques, and putative visions.
- Voluntary Regulation of Attention: Yes. Used masks to enter liminal space between past, communal present, and imaginal future. Used drumming and guided imagery.
- Benefit the (Shaman's) Community and its Members: Yes, due to her intent to celebrate the divine feminine, build a positive relationship with the Earth Mother, unite split communities, connect with a foreign dance company, and engage audience actively in ritual.

As seen in Table 13 below, Raine's *Masks of the Goddess* qualified as a spiritual practice in many ways. Then, as seen in Figure 19 comparisons between the defining constructs of *shaman* and Raine's creative person, process, and product, Raine fulfilled all constructs defining *shaman* except for *social designation.*

Table 13

The Operationalized Definition of Spirituality compared with Raine's Practices in Masks of the Goddess

Qualities and properties of Spirituality	Lauren Raine's *Masks of the Goddess*
Numinous sense of divinity, supernatural being, deity, spirits, universal being.	Yes. Experienced thresholds and limens to imaginal future, spirits, and deity worlds. One dancer reportedly felt possessed by the Dark Goddess.
That which is immaterial, not corporeal, yet may be experienced through something that is physical, as well as within one's self, outside of one's self, or encompassing all.	Yes. Part of ritual's creative process involved dancers asking which masks wanted to be activated.
Concerning an intellectual aspect of spirit.	Yes. Knowledge of communitas, thresholds, rituals, and masks.
Mystical experience or peak experience.	Yes. Reported vision of Corn Mother and flash of light when mask was consecrated. Synchronicity reported for woman who danced Corn Mother.
Intuitive perception of oneness with the universe, ecstatic union, contact with the infinite, identity of personal self joined with cosmic self, divinity, or pure consciousness.	Yes. Raine painted a multi-colored rainbow on the forehead of the Corn Mother mask, to signify the union of all races. Connected audience to Spider Woman with webs of string, dissolving the 4th wall of theatre. Took web threads into desert to extend community into world and sent records of performance to company in Africa.
Results in an experience of nonduality wherein the common source and material of all things is recognized or sensed, including original creation.	Yes. Dancer Josten explained it was time to reconcile within and without, male and female, earth and human.
A higher moral sensibility.	Yes. Evidence of Raine at generative stage of development. Created work to achieve nonduality, honor feminine deities and Mother Goddess, and prevent environmental destruction.

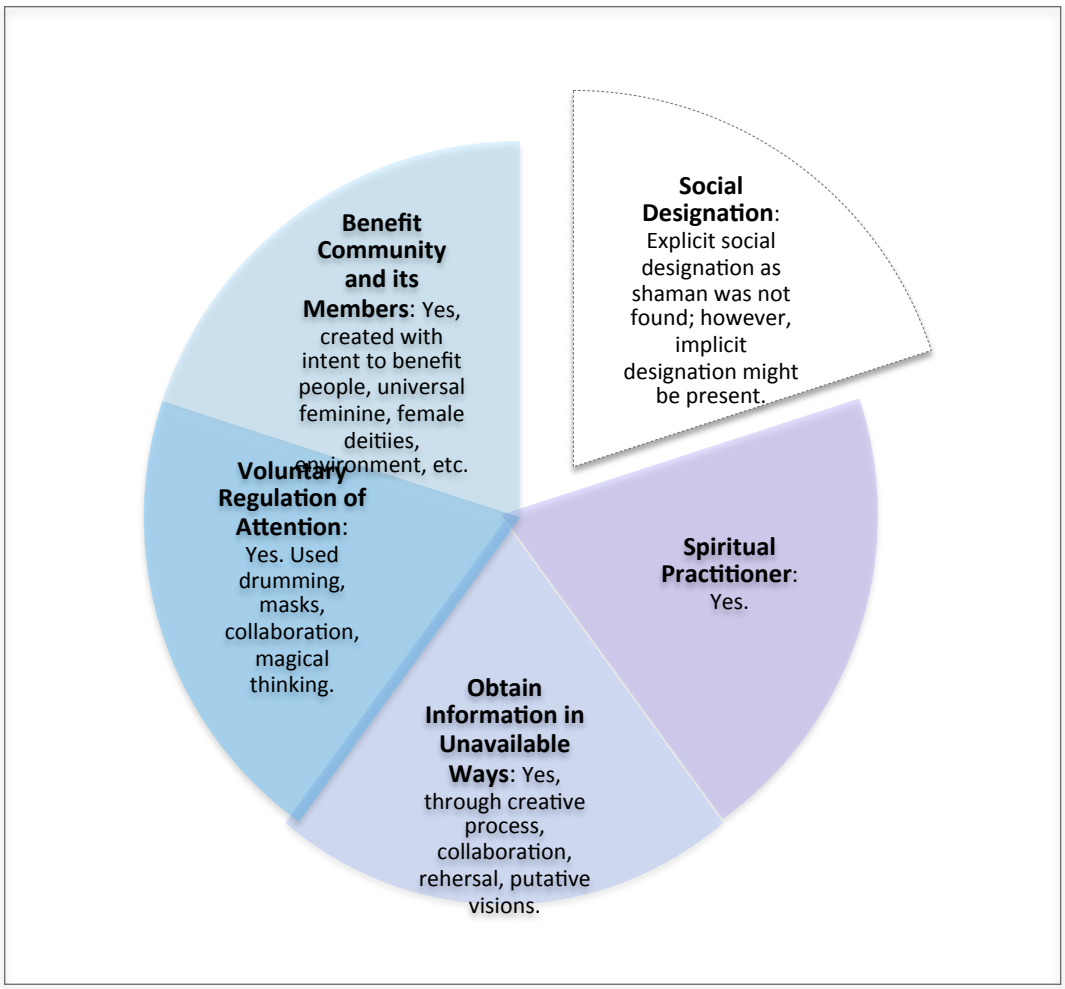


Figure 19. Lauren Raine's performance ritual, *Masks of the Goddess,* fulfilled all constructs defining *shaman* except for *social designation.* However, implicit social designation may be present due to benefits received by Raine's audiences.

While, based on the data considered, Raine does not fully qualify as a *shaman,* Raine does fulfill four out of five constructs defining *shaman.* Therefore, based on data considered compared to operationalized definition of *shaman,* Raine is a shamanistic artist, that is, an artist with shamanlike qualities. However, as discussed later in this dissertation, there may be implicit ways in which art audiences "recognize" – through their receipt of psychological, social, physiological, and/or social benefits from art – a

contemporary artist as a shaman. If an implicit means of social designation is accepted, then Raine might fully qualify as a shaman.

Spiritual Practitioner: Chapter Summary

This chapter compared the spiritual practices of 17 contemporary artists to the operationalized construct *spiritual practitioner* through data collected from multiple fields of study. The artists engaged in a variety of spiritual practices including acting as mediums, receiving inspiration, occult practices, and performing divination and rituals. These spiritual practices were all founded on the artists' beliefs in the reality of spirits and these beliefs directly influenced, even inspired, works of art and intrapsyche creative processes. In *Trance, Art, and Creativity,* Gowan (1975) stated, "A great work of art is the vestigial and durative trace of an aesthetic mystical experience" (pp. 238-239).

Gowan (1975) wrote, "Creative activity…extends the energies of the artist in two dimensions, one inward, and the other outward" (p. 238). Gowan recognized how some artists were inwardly focused mystics, establishing "communications with the obscure depths of the conscious and unconscious psyche, sinking... into the collective unconsciousness…." (pp. 238-239). Yet, many of the artists considered in this chapter created art with an outward focus and beneficial intentions. In response to extrapsyche, outward located environmental press of past or current human actions, the artists worked with ghosts, memories, war trauma, and sought to balance and heal ecological and mythical imbalances.

Table 14 compares Erdrich, Brancusi, Raine, and Hiller to constructs defining *shaman.*

Table 14

Hiller, Erdrich, Brancusi, and Raine Compared to Shaman

Constructs Defining *Shaman*	Susan Hiller	Louise Erdrich	Constantin Brancusi	Lauren Raine
Social designation (as shaman).	Not found	Not found	Not found	Not found
Spiritual practitioner.	Yes, with spirits as metaphors; *but,* spirits are not part of a shamanic cosmology.	Yes, spirits are literary device as well as part or remnants of a Native American shamanic cosmology.	Yes, spirits as immaterial souls that require commemoration, grieving, and assistance with crossing over into land of the dead.	Yes, through spirits of female deities, intent to honor the roles and powers of mythic goddesses.
Obtains information in ways not available to other members of community.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.
Voluntary regulation of attention.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.	Requires additional exploration of data to answer.
Information is used for the benefit of the (shaman's) community and its members.	Yes, in that Hiller makes art to benefit communities consisting of art audiences.	Yes, in that Erdrich made art to benefit communities consisting of her readers.	Yes, to provide Brancusi's audience with an opportunity to grieve, to commemorate heroes, to bring audience attention to costs of war and importance of peace.	Yes, to provide healing to devastated environment, to honor the feminine divine, to create a sense of community.
Conclusion	Hiller partly fulfills operationalized definition of *shaman* through the constructs *spiritual practitioner* and *used to benefit community and its members.* Further research is required to ascertain if Hiller fulfills all defining constructs of *shaman.*	Erdrich partly fulfills operationalized definition of *shaman* through the constructs *spiritual practitioner* and *used to benefit community and its members.* Further research is required to ascertain if Erdrich fulfills all defining constructs of *shaman.*	Brancusi partly fulfills operationalized definition of *shaman* through the constructs *spiritual practitioner* and *used to benefit community and its members.* Further research is required to ascertain if Brancusi fulfills all defining constructs of *shaman.*	Raine partly fulfills operationalized definition of *shaman* through the constructs *spiritual practitioner* and *used to benefit community and its members.* Further research is required to ascertain if Raine fulfills all defining constructs of *shaman.*

In addition to fulfilling the construct *spiritual practitioner,* the artists' spiritual practices were also found to provide benefits to communities and individuals, thus also fulfilling the construct *using information to benefit the (shaman's) community and its members.*

Certain themes, identified in previous chapters with regards to subsets of contemporary artists and/or shamans, were found again including magical thinking, purported extraordinary abilities to see, and reports of paranormal experiences.

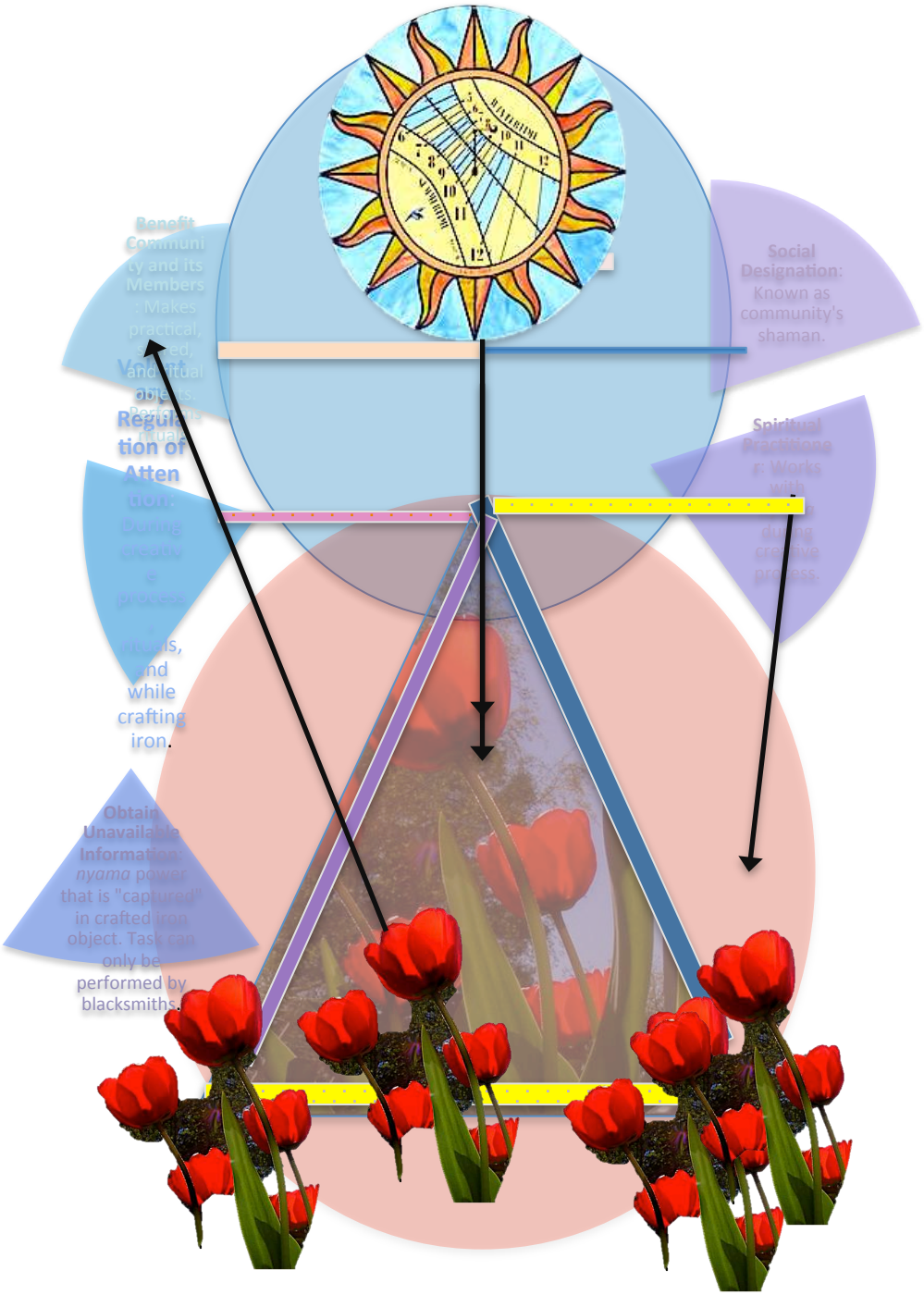
Such experiences and beliefs, from a positivist or empirical perspective, might be viewed as distorted and lacking in reality testing. From an alternate perspective, beliefs in spirits, deities, ghosts, magic, and myth – along with practical, organizational, and social skills required to successfully create large scale monuments, teach, collaborate on nationally touring performance-rituals, etc. – are, when working together, all evidence of integral consciousness.

Integral consciousness, a concept introduced by Gebser (1949/1986), referred to a reflective integration of archaic, magical, mythical, and logical/rational thinking. Gebser saw magical consciousness as typical of indigenous peoples, allowed access to alleged synchronicity, clairvoyance, and telepathy. Magical thinking is often seen in shamanic cultures. Mythical consciousness developed further within civilizations such as Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Greece while mental consciousness is associated with logical, rational thought valued during the Enlightenment. Gebser encouraged people to "live all the structures all the time" (p. 275), so that a rich, creative, meaningful, individually and culturally transformative life could be experienced.

Although magical and mythical consciousness could be viewed as distortions of cognition and reality testing, contemporary artists considered herein, who are spiritual practitioners, trusted their personal phenomenological experiences and rich beliefs regarding spirits, ghosts, deities, metaphors, and myths. These experiences and beliefs allowed new awarenesses to arise, which were conveyed, through art, to art audiences. The ultimate recipients of artistic spiritual inspirations and practices are members of the art audience, that reservoir of being into which the artists' experiences of spirit essence, energy, meaning, and way of being flows.

> It is the prayer of my innermost being to realize my supreme identity
> in the liberated play of consciousness, the Vast Expanse.
> Now is the moment,
> Here is the place of Liberation.
>
> Alex Grey (1994)

Next page: Denita Benyshek, 2012. *Theoretical Model of an Artist-Researcher*, photo montage and digital art.


Benefit Community and its Members: Makes practical, sacred, and ritual objects, benefiting the whole
Social Designation: Known as community's shaman.
Regulation of Attention: During creative process, rituals, and while crafting iron.
Spiritual Practitioner: Works with [illegible] during creative process.
Obtain Unavailable Information: *nyama* power that is "captured" in crafted iron object. Task can only be performed by blacksmiths.

Chapter 7: Obtaining Information and Unavailable Ways

When practicing, a shaman uses "ways" that are generally "unavailable" to the community. The shaman uses these ways to obtain information that will benefit the community and its members. This chapter looks at how neurological functions, personality, alleged paranormal experiences, mental illness, regression, spiritual emergence, and transpersonal orientations can also provide ways for some shamans and subsets of contemporary artists to obtain information that is typically unavailable, although potentially accessible, to many members of their communities.

Operationalization of Constructs

The verb *obtain* (2010) refers to the act of gaining or attaining, usually as the result of purposeful, "planned action or effort." The act of attaining (Attain, 2010) includes coming into possession of something. Within the context of a shaman's practice, such *information* (2010) is "knowledge obtained from investigation, study, or instruction." Shamans obtain beneficial knowledge from formal study during apprenticeship, dreams, purported communications from spirits, alternate states of consciousness achieved through entheogens or actions such as chanting, and directly through other kinds of experiences.

Unavailable (2010) is an adjective referring to that which is "not available or accessible or at hand" or not available when needed; the opposite of something that is available. *Available* (Available, 2010) indicates the ability to avail one's self of that which is present and ready to use.

The *Merriam-Webster Dictionary* offers the following information regarding *way* (2010). The etymological roots mean "to move" and "to carry." There are several, related

definitions. First, *way* may be "a thoroughfare for travel or transportation from place to place… an opening for passage… the course traveled from one place to another… a course (as a series of actions or sequence of events) leading in a direction or toward an objective." A second definition of *way* is "a manner or method of doing or happening" that may have a "specified degree of participation in an activity or enterprise." Third, a *way* can be a "characteristic, regular, or habitual manner or mode of being, behaving, or happening." Fourth, *way* may indicate "the length of a course" or "movement or progress along a course." *Way* can be synonymous with *method,* which is a procedure, process, skill, "technique, or mode of inquiry employed by or proper to a particular discipline or art…skills" (Method, 2010).

Why Shamanic Ways are Unavailable to Community

The ways of a shaman are generally unavailable to community members for several reasons. Most community members do not demonstrate a constellation of signs that indicate a future shaman, do not experience a call to shamanism, and do not undergo shamanic apprenticeship or the transformation resulting from shamanic initiation. As a result, community members usually lack the experience, knowledge, skill, and transformation required for shamanic practice. Moreover, shamans are socially designated and their roles are prescribed by society.

Inasmuch as the role of shaman is often passed down through generations (Dixon, 1908/2004; B. Tedlock, 2005) and reoccurs in families (Winkelman, 2003), there may be a genetic component that excludes people who are not members of a shamanic family. In some societies, shamanism is restricted to a caste (McNaughton, 1988) and nonmembers are prohibited from practicing shamanism.

Because shamans utilize several art forms in their practice (Lommel, 1966), they might also have a high degree of multimedia artistic talent developed during training as well as familiarity with a variety of creative processes.

Any single shamanic way of obtaining information, such as extraordinary artistic talent, skillful practice of a sacred craft, use of entheogens, psi experience, trance, visions or hallucinations, may be evident in members of the community who are not socially designated shamans. However, a single trait does not fulfill all necessary conditions for qualifying as a shaman.

In some shamanic societies such as the Ojibwe, "virtually every person developed some shamanistic techniques" acknowledged Grim (1987), but "the more accomplished shamans were required to train for long periods" (p. 174). Therefore, the distinction between methods used by some shamans and some non-shaman community members may be blurred and a matter of degree, as seen in familial relationships within fuzzy sets, instead of being strictly differentiated due to classical categories.

Although psychologists, to the best of my knowledge, have not yet studied the creative processes of shamans, shamans as a group are considered creative (see Balzer, 2004; Kharitonova, 2004; Rasmussen, 2004; Richards, 2000-2001; B. Tedlock, 2004b; van Deusen, 2004). In addition, many shamans use various forms of shamanic arts in their practice. Thus, it is possible that research on creativity and artists might be generalizable onto shamans although I recognize that such generalizations are speculative at this point.

Hereafter, I consider the ways that neurological functions, personality traits, purported paranormal experiences, mental health, mental illness, regression, spiritual

emergence, transpersonal orientations, alternate states of consciousness, music, and entheogens can provide information to shamans and artists.

A Few (of Many) Neurological Ways

The nascent field of neurology is making numerous discoveries relevant to shamanism, art, and creativity. Instead of presenting a thorough and cumbersome overview of this research, I instead take a few short excursions down several neurological routes that may be travelled by artists, shamans, and creators.

Dopaminergic Function

> I awoke. I saw a leafless tree.
> White trunk, white branches
> tipped in red, a thousand tiny mirrors
> hanging by thin threads.
> A silver flute dangling
> above antlers tipped in dew,
> deer grazing or gazing and still.
>
> Then, I opened my eyes.
>
> Denita Benyshek, 2011

Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that influences the experiences of emotions, pleasure, and pain, while also affecting sleep, memory, motivation, learning, and cognition, goal directedness, abstract representation, and many more functions. Dopamine also plays a key role in the neurological message pathways of the brain. These functions, to various degrees, are present in all humans (Chermahini & Hommel, 2010; Cousins, Butts, & Young, 2009; Manzano, Cervenka, Karabanov, Farde, & Ullén, 2010; Garcia et al., 2010).

Previc (2011) reviewed the relationships between dopamine, altered consciousness, and shamanic ecstasy, explaining how numerous, complex neurological systems are involved in different states of consciousness. The functioning of the dopamine system is enhanced by some shamanic activities. Elevated dopamine and endorphin levels can result from shamanic rituals incorporating prolonged dancing, monotonous drumming, rhythmic chanting, or sleep deprivation. According to Winkelman (2010), elevated dopamine levels can produce altered states of consciousness, aid in achievement of ecstasy, and produce the kinds of abstract representations seen in shamanic journeys to spirit worlds.

Previc's (2011) consideration of dopamine function ranged widely through a loose collection of substances that alter consciousness, many of which are not directly involved with dopaminergic function, the presence of dopamine in other mammals, the influence of several neurotransmitters, the evolution of dopamine function in humans, the rise and fall of shamanism, and the possible relationship to prehistoric art. However, Previc does not consider which specific aspects of dopaminergic function are related to shamanism.

There is almost no data on dopaminergic function in shamans and little data on dopaminergic function in artists. Research on relationships between dopaminergic function and creativity generally relies on measurements of divergent thinking. But, not all researchers agree that divergent thinking is a valid measurement of creativity (Runco, 1991).

Latent inhibition and D2 receptors. Fewer dopamine D2 receptor genes are associated with divergent thinking, a cognitive ability many researchers have considered

typical of creativity. Dopaminergic function also appears to be one of the keys that can be used by creative individuals to make novel associations and "escape the box"; yet, dopamine also appears to "unlock" symptoms of mental illness.

D2 receptor activity and dopaminergic function alterations were linked to positive and negative symptoms of psychosis (Abi-Dargham, & Laruelle, 2007; Chavez-Eakle et al., 2007; Cousins et al., 2009; Guillin et al., 2005; Okubo, Olsson, & Borg, 2006; Weinberger & Laruelle, 2001), also affecting the symptoms of schizophrenia (Carson, 2010; Talvik et al., 2006) and bipolar disorder (Cousins et al., 2009).

After conducting a review of the literature, Eysenck (1995) concluded that the presence of more dopamine D2 receptors causes a higher degree of inhibition. During another review, Carson (2010) recognized that active schizophrenia and psychosis are more likely when there is inadequate latent inhibition. However, a lower level of latent inhibition can be observed within a continuum reaching from "hospitalized psychotics to high-functioning normals" (Carson, p. 183). Thus, a lesser degree of latent inhibition is not necessarily associated with psychosis or other severe form of mental illness.

Associations. Fewer D2 receptors can also benefit the creative process. Eysenck (1995) concluded that lower latent inhibition enhances the ability to make associations from disparate elements "in a novel and original synthesis" (p. 184) in some, but not all, circumstances.

Similarly, Carson, Peterson, and Higgins (2003) found high functioning and creative individuals received advantages from attenuated, weaker or reduced, latent inhibition. Carson (2010) later commented, "Attenuated latent inhibition may increase

the probability of making novel or original associations among disparate stimuli by increasing the amount of information available to conscious awareness" (p. 183).

Another aspect of neurological processing related to creativity and latent inhibition, explained Dietrich (2004), occurs when "the attentional system is down-regulated, thoughts that are unguided by social norms and unfiltered by conventional rationality become represented in working memory" (p. 7). Thoughts drift unsystematically, even chaotically, until associations emerge. "Surprise violations of learned associations" activate the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, opening the gate of awareness and allowing "novel combinations of information that contradict conventional wisdom" (p. 7) to more easily enter consciousness.

Associations are one way through which creators make novel discoveries, gain insight, and construct understanding. Carol Gilligan (1993), psychologist, poet, and dramatist, represented the feeling tone of her research findings through found poetry based on statements by adolescent girls. Perhaps due to Gilligan's experience and training in art and psychology, she understood the importance of associations, where "the power of association" can "undo dissociation" (Gilligan as cited in Kiegelmann, 2009). Gilligan explained:

> You cannot argue yourself out of a paradigm, but the process of association can free you from its logic. The radical potential that inheres in psychological research lies in this recognition: that the logic of the psyche is an associative logic, the logic of dreams and poetry and memory. It's a logic of connection that runs under the cultural radar…. When I ask myself, why artists are often the best psychologists—why, as Freud noted, poets are often light years ahead—it's because of their use of associative methods. This allows them to break through dissociation, to see the cultural framework, which is why artists often are the ones who speak the unspoken and reveal what is hidden. (as cited in Kiegelmann, 2009)

To summarize the research cited regarding dopamine D2 receptors, lowered latent inhibition and fewer dopamine D2 receptors appear to be linked with psychosis, schizophrenia, and bipolar disorder; yet, in individuals who are high functioning or highly creative, lowered latent inhibition and fewer dopamine D2 receptors are linked to beneficial, novel associations and the ability to see beyond conventions and escape paradigms. Such dopaminergic functions are commonly seen in poets and artists working in a variety of media.

D2 receptor gene and divergent thinking. At least partially, novel associations result from divergent thinking, which is one cognitive function measured by some tests of creativity. Other assessments of creativity measure convergent thinking, rate creative products, conduct biographical or historical reviews, or rely on self-assessment.

Guilford (1975) assessed intelligence via operations (including cognition, memory recording, memory retention, divergent production, convergent production, and evaluation), content (consisting of figural, symbolic, semantic), and product (the ability to apply particular operations to certain subjects through units, classes, relations, systems, transformations, and implications). Guilford conceived of creativity as an ability to recognize problems, with ideational, associational, and expressional fluency, and spontaneous and adaptive flexibility. Fluency and spontaneity in generating numerous ideas or solutions to a single problem are signs of divergent thinking. Because the number of ideas generated can be measured, divergent thinking is often used to provide a quantitative measurement of creativity.

However, considering the validity of Guilford's definition and assessment of creativity, Sternberg and Grigorenko (2000-2001) demonstrated that "quantitative

support of numerous factor-analytic investigations" supporting Guilford's assessment of creativity "was not really credible" (p. 310). Moreover, numerous studies found low correlations between "scores on the Guilford-type tests… against other ratings of creativity" (p. 314). For example, divergent thinking was not found to correspond with adult creativity as measured in actual work (J. H. Austin, 1978/2003; Cattell, 1971). Sternberg and Grigorenko (2000-2001) concluded that Guilford's tests for creativity were invalid.

Nonetheless, researchers in Europe exploring associations between creativity and dopaminergic function often relied on the *Berliner Intelligenz Struktur Test* (BI) devised by Jäger (1984). The BI provides a psychometric measure of divergent thinking.

Through BI assessments of divergent thinking, Manzano et al. (2010) "investigated the relationship between creative ability and dopamine D2 receptor expression in [mentally] healthy individuals, with a focus on regions where aberrations in dopaminergic function have previously been associated with psychotic symptoms and a genetic liability to schizophrenia" (p. 1). Manzano et al. cited several studies (see, e.g., Carson et al., 2003; Christensen, Guilford, Merrifield, & Wilson, 1960; Furnham & Bachtiar, 2008; McGrew, 2009; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999) that supported the link between divergent thinking and general creativity, creative achievement, or personality traits associated with creativity. However, Manzano et al. (2010) did not mention studies (see, e.g., J. H. Austin, 1978/2003; Cattell, 1971; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2000-2001) that found divergent thinking and creativity were not associated.

Given the outstanding questions regarding the validity of measuring creativity via divergent thinking, the following research findings must be considered provisional.

Manzano et al. (2010) found the D2 receptor system, specifically referring to D2 binding potential (D2BP), and thalamic function were significantly involved in divergent thinking. "The main finding in the present study is a negative correlation between divergent thinking and D2BP in the thalamus…." (p. 2). Manzano et al. also suggested that "the low D2BP measurements in individuals with high creativity scores… are related primarily to a reduced density of dopamine D2 receptors, rather than an increased level of endogenous dopamine" (p. 2). The researchers speculated that fewer D2 receptors increased fluency, enabled "flexibility and switching between representations," widened "the associative range," and decreased "selectivity," resulting in "originality and elaboration" (Manzano et al., p. 3).

> It can be speculated that aberrant thalamic function may promote unusual associations, as well as improved performance on divergent thinking tests in healthy individuals, in the absence of the detrimental effects typically associated with psychiatric disorders. In other words, thinking outside the box might be facilitated by having a somewhat less intact box. (Manzano et al., p. 3)

Reuter, Roth, Holve, and Henning (2006) also utilized the *Berliner Intelligenz Struktur Test* to measure creativity in their search for "candidate genes for creativity" through the catechol-O-methyltransferase gene, the dopamine D2 receptor gene, and the serotenergic gene TPH1. The researchers found that the A1+ allele of the dopamine D2 receptor gene was associated with higher scores in verbal creativity and the serotenergic TPH1 gene was associated with "significantly higher scores in figural and in numeric creativity" (Reuter et al., p. 190) – not only with divergent thinking. Higher scores in attentional set shifting and response flexibility, also associated with creativity, were also found in carriers of the A1+ allele of the dopamine D2 receptor gene.

Another study also used divergent thinking to measure creativity. Chermahini and Hommel (2010) compared divergent thinking, convergent thinking, and a marker of

dopaminergic functioning as seen in eye blink rate (EBR). Flexibility and divergent thinking followed "an inverted U-shape function with medium EBR being associated with greatest flexibility. Convergent thinking was positively correlated with intelligence but negatively correlated with EBR, suggesting that higher dopamine levels impair convergent thinking" (p. 458). The researchers concluded, "findings support the claim that creativity and dopamine are related." But, they also called for more conceptual differentiation with respect to the processes involved in creative performance" (p. 458).

Shared vulnerability and moderating factors. Whether aspects of creativity are derived from mental health or lead to mental health, "either type of relationship," commented Richards (1990), "can occur directly or through the mediation of a third factor (which itself can be multivariate and complex)" (p. 320). Richards noted several creative traits associated with mental health. Motivation is one contributing factor to mentally healthy creativity. Other influential traits associated with mentally healthy creators include being alert, confident, energetic, adaptable, introverted, lack of repression and suppression, and memories of unhappy childhood with additional emotional turbulence later in life. Healthy functioning - as manifested in physical health, acute perception, high cognition, and appropriate affect - enhances creativity. Early advantages, opportunities, and success also enhance creativity even though eminent creators often suffered from troubled, even traumatic, childhoods and minimal resources during childhood.

Positive moderating factors for creativity can also include executive function (Soeiro-de-Souza, Dias, Bio, Post, & Moreno, 2011), ego strength (Eiduson, 1958; Torrance, 1960), enjoyment of intrinsic rewards (Amabile, 1995), influence and support

of mentors (Simonton, 1984; Zuckerman, 1977), social support, caring relationships, participatory settings, social value for nonconformity (Richards, 2010), self-discipline, assertiveness and organizational skills required to reserve time and mental energy for creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996) – to name only a few.

A model that integrates shared vulnerability with protective factors might explain why "shared biological components," such as certain dopaminergic functions, might be expressed "as either mental illness or as creative genius based on the presence of other moderating factors*"* (Carson, 2010, p. 185).

> This model, supported by recent findings from neuroscience and molecular genetics, suggests that the biological determinants conferring risk for psychopathology interact with protective cognitive factors to enhance creative ideation. Elements of shared vulnerability include cognitive disinhibition (which allows more stimuli into conscious awareness), an attentional style driven by novelty salience, and neural hyperconnectivity that may increase associations among disparate stimuli. These vulnerabilities interact with superior meta-cognitive protective factors, such as high IQ, increased working memory capacity, and enhanced cognitive flexibility, to enlarge the range and depth of stimuli available in conscious awareness to be manipulated and combined to form novel and original ideas. (Carson, 2011, p. 144)

There are additional moderating factors that might contribute to the expression of psychopathology in creative individuals. These factors include stigma, outsider status, and poverty or low income, which can be associated with psychopathology. In Canada, most "artists are hovering at poverty levels" (Adams, 2009) with 43% of artists earning below $10,000 and incomes that have steadily decreased since 1990. A survey of 45,000 professional artists in Australia revealed, "the overwhelming majority of artists are living in dire poverty." Further, "Limited work opportunities, poor financial return and lack of access to funding or financial support forces artists to take on other paid work, thus making it difficult for them to sustain their creative work" (Hollister, 2004). "Most

artists' incomes were too low to support their basic needs... the majority lived far below the poverty line" (Hollister), a predicament that can cause perpetual anxiety.

On one hand, creative productivity is positively related to positive mood. On the other hand, creativity is enhanced when individuals prone to depression are subjected to social rejection and disapproval (Carson & Becker, 2003). Then again, creative work in one's own domain improves mood. Many of these associations, such as IQ threshold (Barron, 1969) are necessary but not sufficient for creativity (Richards, 2010). Nonetheless, such moderating factors may contribute to resilience, support coping, enhance creative processes that work through issues, and help provide compensatory advantages to creativity (Richards). While the influence of dopaminergic functions on creativity appears likely, many additional moderating factors are involved in myriad complex creative processes and relationships.

Dopaminergic function: Discussion. There is little research on the dopaminergic function in shamans apart from reports that shamanic practices such as dancing, drumming, and chanting raises dopamine levels. High dopamine levels are also associated with divergent thinking, which is considered an indication of creativity by some, but not all, researchers. There may be an association between shamanic practices that raise dopamine levels, divergent thinking, and creativity.

Several studies found lower numbers of dopamine D2 receptors and fewer D2 receptor genes with the A1+ allelle were both associated with lower latent inhibition, an increase in associations, novel combinations, divergent thinking, fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, attentional set shifting, and response flexibility. These cognitive functions are associated with creativity and, in individuals who are high functioning,

heighten creative processes. Without high functioning, lower latent inhibition is associated with schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and other psychoses.

These forms of mental illness were previously linked with shamans, highly creative individuals, and artists. Shamans were diagnosed as schizophrenic or psychotic by earlier researchers (see Devereaux, 1956/2004, 1961, 1969; Silverman, 1967) while more recent research linked artists and highly creative individuals – or their first-degree relatives – with schizophrenia (Richards, 2000-2001) and bipolar disorder (Jamison, 1989, 1993; Richards et al., 1997). Perhaps dopaminergic functioning and latent inhibition are the "missing links" between mental health, mental illness, shamans, artists, and creators (see Noll, 1983).

According to Gilligan (Gilligan & Kiegelmann, 2009), lowered latent inhibition allows artists access to see what is hidden from non-artists. Perhaps lowered latent inhibition also allows shamans to see unavailable information concealed from non-shamans. Perhaps shamanic apprentices learn how to deliberately lower latent inhibition so that they can learn to see what is otherwise hidden.

Because artists and shamans are creative individuals, we can suspect that both groups probably have fewer dopamine D2 receptors and are more likely to have receptor genes with the A1+ allele. Dopaminergic functions associated with different forms of cognition linked with creativity may be one way that artists and shamans are able to access information that is unavailable to the less creative members of their communities. Table 15 provides a summary of the research findings on dopaminergic functions.

Table 15

Comparison of Dopaminergic Functions

Dopamine	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Highly Creative Individuals
General Information	Shamanic activities enhance dopamine system. Dopamine can produce altered states of consciousness and produces abstract representations seen in shamanic journeys and spirit worlds. Aids achievement of ecstasy. **Prolonged dancing, monotonous drumming, rhythmic chanting elevates endorphin and dopamine levels.** **If shamans have higher dopamine levels during certain shamanic practices, do shamans also demonstrate more divergent thinking than nonshamans?**	Higher levels of dopamine appear to be associated with addiction. Creative writers were found to have more alcoholism than average. Perhaps higher levels of dopamine produces altered states of consciousness during creativity that contributes to creative flow and produces abstract representations see in media such as visual art, dance, or film.	Novel associations. **High dopamine levels impair convergent thinking and aid divergent thinking**.
Dopamine D2 Receptor Gene	Not found in data considered.	Likely to be similar to findings for highly creative individuals.	Linked to divergent thinking, fluency, spontaneity. Associated with mental illness without high functioning.
D2 Receptor Gene: A1+ allele	Not found in data considered.	Artists working in different media would probably score differently based on presence or absence of A1+ allele. Writers are likely to have higher verbal creativity scores, which is associated	Higher scores in verbal creativity. Higher scores in attentional set shifting and response flexibility.

		with the A1+ allele. This might partly explain the stronger prevalence of alcoholism in creative writers. (Visual artists probably have higher figural creativity scores, and musicians probably have higher numeric creativity scores. Both kinds of creativity are linked to the serotenergic TPH1 gene.) *If* these variations and links between types of genes and types of creativity are found in future studies, then it might be invalid to generalize all data on dopaminergic function and creativity onto all kinds of artists.	
D2 Receptor System	Not found in data considered.		Fewer D2 receptors: • Positive and negative symptoms of psychosis, especially schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. • Linked with creativity via assessments of divergent thinking. • Increases flexibility. • Enables switching between representations. • Widens range of associations. • Decreases selectivity. • Results in originality and elaboration.
D2 Binding Potential (D2BP)	Not found in data considered.		Low D2BP: • Increases divergent thinking, creativity, flexibility, and fluency. • Supports switching between representations. • Decreased selectivity. • Produces original ideas and elaboration.

Latent Inhibition	**Associated with how shamanic apprentices develop second or inner sight?** Does lower latent inhibition, and resulting kinds of cognition, explain why shamans were diagnosed with schizophrenia or psychosis by earlier researchers?	**Lower latent inhibition:** • **power of associations;** • **break through dissociation;** • **see cultural framework;** • **speak unspoken;** • **see what is hidden.** Does lower latent inhibition, and resulting kinds of cognition, explain why schizophrenia, psychosis, and bipolar disorder have a higher rate of occurrence in artists, first degree relatives of artists, or first degree relatives of highly creative individuals?	More D2 receptors = more inhibition. Fewer D2 receptors = lower latent inhibition. While less inhibition is not necessarily associated with mental illness and can be found in high functioning normals, lower latent inhibition is also found in active schizophrenia and psychosis. High functioning, highly creative individuals receive benefits from reduced latent inhibition: • increases novel, original associations with disparate stimuli; • increases information to conscious awareness; • increases ability to hold multiple representations in working memory; • down regulates attention system; • thoughts unguided by social norms; • thoughts unfiltered by conventional rationality; • thoughts drift randomly; • violations of learned associations; • unconventional; • gains insight; • constructs understanding.

Note: Arrows indicate a few possible relationships and connections between shamans, contemporary artists, and highly creative individuals.

Table 15 reveals many gaps in research knowledge and indicates multiple opportunities for future research. Many qualities, properties, and traits considered typical of creativity were not studied in populations of shamans or artists.

Therefore, due to these gaps in knowledge, we cannot casually generalize the findings of these studies of dopaminergic function onto artists or shamans as neither population provided subjects for the studies. Instead, groups of mentally healthy individuals were tested for the presence and degree of creativity that could be measured primarily via divergent thinking – and not all researchers accept divergent thinking as a valid indication of creativity.

From my perspective, the lack of correspondence between divergent thinking and creativity evident in creative products is not a surprise inasmuch as there are many differences between specific aspects of creative *thought processes* and the entire "package" of emotional, spiritual, cognitive, neurological, etc. processes that make up a creative *person* and result in a creative *product.* In of itself, divergent thinking is not sufficient to produce the sculpture of Brancusi, the masks of Tlingit shamans, or the choreography of Martha Graham.

As Richards (2001) observed:

> All divergent processing operates within a larger context, and its tension with convergent processes contains potential for creative leaps and bifurcations, discussed at both the social and individual levels. Preliminary data on aesthetic preference suggest creative people also may seek challenges and chaotic attractors of higher "dimensionality"; this may help drive the process. (p. 149)

In summary, dopaminergic function was found to be associated with shamanic altered states of consciousness, aspects of shamanic ritual, and shamanic ecstasy. Dopaminergic functions might also provide links between shamans and some aspects of creativity.

Dopaminergic function provides many benefits for highly functioning creative or artistic individuals, including increasing divergent thinking, associations, ideational fluency, insight, understanding, originality, and the ability to "think outside the box," thus escaping conventional thinking.

Yet, some of the dopaminergic functions associated with divergent thinking or other signs of creativity were also associated with an increase in psychoses such as schizophrenia and bipolar disorder. Perhaps this association explains why shamans were previously considered psychotic. Clearly, there are additional influences operating that determine whether the less typical dopaminergic functions result in high functioning creativity or bizarre associations symptomatic of some forms of mental illness. Moderating shared vulnerabilities and protective factors may at least partially explain why dopaminergic functions, such as latent inhibition, are expressed as mental illness or creative genius in shamans or contemporary artists.

Sailing Brain Waves

Neurological processes underlying creativity and shamanic activities are complex, interwoven, and only partially understood. At this time, there are studies linking specific brain wave activities and patterns to creativity, psychological integration, and shamanism.

Gamma, theta, alpha, and delta. With regards to shamanism, Winkelman (2000) explained :

> Theta and alpha wave production is focused in the limbic system, which plays a vital role in subjective apperception in both emotional mentation and rational thought, using feelings for guiding behavior. (p. 145)

In addition, theta waves are associated with enhanced internal thought processes and memory consolidation (Winkelman, 2000) in shamans and also other individuals.

The important role of memory, in shamanic practices and artistic creativity, is examined at length later in this dissertation.

Some studies recognized the importance of theta, alpha, and gamma waves to creativity. Theta waves often are associated with creativity processes including defocused attention, simultaneous representations (Martindale, 1999b), vivid imagery, intuition, fantasy, and reverie (Green & Green, 1977). Krippner (1999) noted the importance of daydreaming and reverie in the creative process of composers Debussy, Brahms, and Franck.

Alpha waves also play an important role in creativity.

> Uncreative students produce the same amount of alpha waves whether they are asked to make up ordinary stories or highly original stories. But creative students produce more alpha waves when they are asked to be original than when they are asked to produce ordinary stories. It is as if naturally creative students have an alpha switch they turn on when they need to do creative work. (Lindskoog, 1989, p. 29)

Creativity, as measured through "four verbal tasks differentially drawing on creative idea generation," was "associated with alpha synchronization in frontal brain regions and with a diffuse and widespread pattern of alpha synchronization over parietal cortical regions" (Fink, Grabner, Benedik, Reishofer, & Hauswirth, 2009). The fMRI study revealed that task performance was associated with strong activation in frontal regions of the left hemisphere. (Fink et al., p. 734)

An internal focus increases alpha waves that may be associated with creativity (Martindale & Hasenfus, 1978). Lower levels of arousal, with attending right-hemisphere activation, frequently resulted in heightened creativity as did low cortical activation (Kaufman, Kornilov, Bristol, Tan, & Grigorenko, 2010; Martindale, 1999b). This

provides access to novel associations and recombinations, and certain types of alpha waves "increase during creative tasks" (Kaufman et al., 2010, p. 221)

Before someone is aware of a solution to a problem, there is "a burst of brain activity. In fact, 300 milliseconds before a participating communicates the answer, the EEG registers a spike of gamma rhythm – the highest electrical frequency of the brain" (Kaufman et al., 2010, p. 403).

As noted earlier, higher degrees of creativity, and certain traits and experiences found more frequently in artists and shamans than the general population, is associated with transliminality. In one study of a nonclinical population, Fleck et al. (2008) found an association between specific EEG patterns and transliminality.

Synchronization and integration. Neurological integrity and unification is also achieved through certain processes used by shamans, artists, and others. Before age five, the brain hemispheres of most children are synchronized. Then, "in different modes and at different rhythms" (C. Pratt, 2007, p. 67), the right hemisphere begins specializing in pattern recognition while the left hemisphere specializes in logic and rational processes. Unified, integrated brain function "can be induced during periods of intense creativity, deep meditation, or monotonous rhythmic sound, like the shaman's drumming" (p. 68).

These different ways of achieving neurological synchronization are ways utilized in shamanic healing. Shamans, in general, utilize a variety of technologies to create slow wave discharges in the limbic system, which results in frontal cortex synchronization (Mandel, 1980). Winkelman (2000) found shamanic practices achieved:

> Integration by physically stimulating systematic brain-wave discharge patterns that activate affects, memories, attachments, and other psychodynamic processes…. This activation forces normally unconscious or preconscious

> primary information-processing functions and outputs to be integrated into the operations of the frontal cortex. (p. xiii)

Zinacanteco shamans engaged types of cognition not available to non-shamans, including ways of thinking that produce more construct categories. The categories are then applied to ambiguity which supports integration (Shweder, 1972) and, apparently, gives understandable form to ambiguity.

Do contemporary artists achieve neurological synchronization during creative and/or healing work? Bhattacharya and Petsche (2005) studied professional, trained female artists and non-artists without art training. During mental composition of own choice drawings, Bhattacharya and Petsche found that artists "showed significantly stronger short- and long-range delta band synchronization, whereas the non-artists showed enhancement in short-range beta and gamma band synchronization" (p. 1).

Both groups showed neurological synchronization; however, artists and non-artists synchronized different brain waves. "Strong right hemispheric dominance in terms of synchronization was found in the artists" and "in artists, patterns of functional cooperation between cortical regions during mental creation of drawings were significantly different from those in non-artists" (Bhattacharya & Petsche, 2005, p. 1). Bhattacharya and Petsche speculated, "higher synchrony in the low-frequency band is possibly due to the involvement of a more advanced long-term visual art memory and to extensive top-down processing" (p. 1).

Brain waves: Discussion. All of these brain wave patterns produced during creativity, regardless of the kind of creativity involved, can be assumed to influence the creativity of artists to varying degrees as well as creative shamans. However,

neurological research on shamanism is presently quite limited and does not allow for "apples to apples" comparisons with neurological research on creativity or artists.

Furthermore, little neurological research on creativity focused on subsets of creators, namely artists, for whom there is likely to be specialized brain functions. For example, musicians have enhanced subcortical auditory and audiovisual processing of speech and music (Musacchia, Sams, Skoe, & Kraus, 2007), more voluntary cognitive control in auditory working memory (Pallesen et al., 2010), and equilateral interhemispheric transfer for visual processing (Patston, Kirk, Rolfe, Corballis, & Tippett, 2007). We can suspect – although we do not know – that shamans who are also musicians may utilize similar neurological processes.

In summary, specific brain wave patterns have been identified in association with certain aspects of creativity. Although certain brain wave patterns were discussed in reference to shamanic practices, those brain wave patterns are not exclusive to shamans. Based on the limited data available, brain wave patterns exclusive to shamanism were not found and, therefore, cannot be compared to contemporary artists.

We should also keep in mind that a shaman's work is not limited to the kinds of creativity usually measured by psychometric assessments. Inasmuch as different brain wave patterns accompany different activities, there may be certain patterns that are produced for specific shamanic activities, such as diagnosing a client's problems, demonstrating empathy for a client, or preparing herbal remedies. When these brain wave patterns are identified, then there can be more fruitful comparisons made with different activities performed by contemporary artists. At this time, there appears to be insignificant data for such comparisons.

Creative processes can open the lid of the "Pandora's Box" of the unconscious, releasing previously unknown material, and "it can take great courage to confront this" (Richards, 2010, p. 195). The practice of shamanism appears to also release unconscious material while providing a means of integrating the material in a way that is beneficial to the shaman, the shaman's client, and the shaman's community. Many shamans benefit from hemispheric brain integration that is built as habitual behavior is dissolved. Repressed memories return to consciousness. Insight is heightened, attention to imagetic processes increase, and transpersonal identity emerges (Winkelman, 2000).

I personally experienced all of these steps, repeatedly, during extended periods of artistic creativity. Although this comment is anecdotal, and therefore of limited value as data, I suggest that many, perhaps most, artists repeatedly move through these stages and experience these benefits.

Neurological Ways: A Few More Ideas and Suggestions

There is a need for controlled research that investigates the neurological processes of shamans that are associated with creativity. Perhaps the specialized forms of creativity utilized by shamans results from specialized neurological functions similar to how musicians have specialized neurological functions. Maybe contemporary artists who create in ways similar to shamans share some, if not all, shamanic neurological processes. There may well be differences in neurological functions between different kinds of shamans just as there are differences in neurological functions between musicians and non-musician artists.

While there seem to be some similarities between the alpha and theta wave patterns of shamans and individuals who are assessed as being more creative, additional

research is required to look more carefully for data that would assist in comparisons and role differentiation. Such differentiation might also distinguish between artists and art audiences, shamans and shamanic communities.

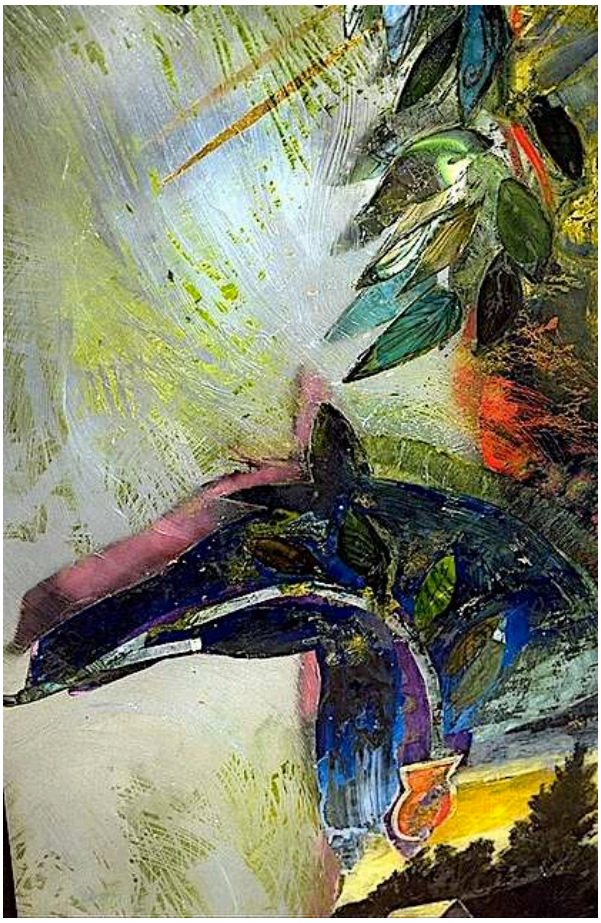
Because shamanic practices appear to strengthen the immune system (Achterberg, 2002), shamanic methods might prove useful to contemporary artists and, perhaps especially, those creative individuals who are more vulnerable to mental illness or disease involving the immune system.

Although creativity is often touted as beneficial to physical health including immune system functioning (see Richards, 2010), musical talent, left-handedness, and anomalous brain dominance in female musicians is associated with immune system vulnerability (Hassler & Gupta, 1993), which can lead to immune system disorders.

Does immune system vulnerability cause shamanic illness in certain individuals with musical talent? Does studying art-related shamanic technologies, during traditional apprenticeships, strengthen immune systems? As a result, are symptoms of shamanic illness alleviated, with initiated shamans enjoying improved physical health?

This incomplete review of research literature on neurological functioning in shamans, artists[11], and highly creative individuals provides few answers and raises many questions. Those questions point in the direction of future research that can undertake parallel explorations of the neurological processes and structures in all three populations.

[11] Bryden (2005) provided an overview of neuropsychological research on writing, music, and visual art.



Odyssey, detail, Denita Benyshek. Reverse-painted, collaged glass, mirror. Private Collection, Santa Fe, NM.

Personality

There is little – if any - psychological research focused directly on the creativity of shamans. A few psychological studies on the personality characteristics of shamans did find some traits associated with creativity.

In one study, shamans demonstrated field independence, a creative trait (see Dacey & Lennon, 1998), trusted their own interpretations of Rorsarch cards and ignored suggestions from researchers (Shweder, 1972).

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) and Dacey and Lennon (1998) identified multiple personality traits strongly correlated with creativity: tolerance of ambiguity, stimulus freedom, flexibility, risk taking, preference for disorder, delay of gratification, openness, less defensiveness, high intelligence, playfulness, originality, adaptability, sensitivity, curiosity, ownership of cultural capital, complexity, and analytical, intuitive, divergent, and convergent thinking. Cognitive mobility allows creators the flexible use of complex or primitive mental processes, ego resilience, field independence, and freedom from gender stereotyping (Dacey & Lennon, 1998).

Resilience: The Branch that Grows and Does Not Break

Ego resilience, the capacity to modify levels of ego control to meet a situation's demands (Dacey & Lennon, 1998), is a trait of creative individuals. Resilience allows successful "transit of stress-induced episodes of disorganization" (Richards, 1997, p. 524). When confronted by new situations, resilient individuals are resourceful, flexible, and adaptive (Block, 1993). Resilient adaptation successfully fosters transformation.

Silverman (1963, p. 244) perceived shamans as "remarkably resilient." According to Cameron (1967), shamans demonstrate the power of the human soul to emerge from adversity and helplessness in the face of fearsome and chaotic realities.

Ambiguity, Polarities, and Simultaneous Realities: How Stones are Feathers

Ambiguity is another trait linked with creativity (Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Dacey & Lennon, 1998). Shamans are said to be specialists of ambiguity (Hansen, 2001). Toleration of ambiguity marked master spiritual practitioners who participated in a single study and these practitioners included an Apache shaman (Foreman, 1993). In a discussion about ancient Central and South American art, Stone (2003) determined that

"a deliberate engagement with ambiguity, perhaps the essential feature of shamanism, productively fires the artistic imagination, catalyzing inventive ways to express the ineffable cosmic flux" (p. 67). To represent "a liminal being who is both Here and Not-Here" (Stone, p. 67), a shaman must be capable of believing, living, and enacting shifting boundaries and multiple foci.

In turn, these kinds of ambiguous, liminal experiences were translated into artistic styles and techniques. Paradoxically, a liminal being, perhaps conceived as a spirit, "born of visionary multiplicity can be lent physical form through a variety of artistic strategies" (Stone, 2011, p. 67). Artistic ways of representing reality-ambiguous beings includes "juxtaposition, conflation, substitution of parts, *pars pro toto* (the part stands for the whole), inversion, doubled reading (through contour rivalry, figure-ground reversal, and three-dimensional versus two-dimensional aspects), mirror-imaging, abstraction, and interiority" (Stone, p. 67).

These visual representation techniques are ways that shamans artistically represent the *simultaneous realities* they inhabit. *Simultaneous realities* is a concept that arose during my conversation with organization systems expert-Alaskan tribal lands researcher-sculptor-dowser, Carl Hild (see 2007). We were discussing the depiction of ambiguity, multiple realms, and spirits in the visual art and literature of Alaskan and Pacific Northwest Native Americans and the films, visual art, and literature of the Slavs.

Simultaneous realities can represent interpenetrating realities, different realms, different times, different entities, within one work of materially static art which seems to represent a "snapshot" of a fleetingly, seemingly fixed moment, while over time is ever in

flux. Simultaneous realities are experienced during dreams, experiences of art, shamanic journeys, visions, and possession.

Creative individuals also appear to embody opposites simultaneously. Frank Barron (1922-2002), a pioneering founder of creativity studies, noted how "the creative person is both more primitive and more cultivated, more destructive and more constructive, occasionally crazier and yet adamantly saner, than the average person" (as cited in Richards, 2010, p. 195). Barron's oft quoted observation shows the seemingly opposite traits typifying highly creative individuals co-existing in one phenomenological experience of reality.

Mexican Octavio Paz (1914-1998) wrote poetry and served as a diplomat. He (Paz, 1956/1987) described how simultaneous realities function in poetry:

> Epic, dramatic, or lyric, condensed in a phrase or spread out over a thousand pages, every image approximates or unites realities that are opposite, indifferent, or far apart. That is, it subjects the plurality of the real to unity…. Not without righteous amazement do children discover one day that a pound of stone weighs the same as a pound of feathers. It is difficult for them to reduce stones and feathers to the abstraction pound. They realize that stones and feathers have abandoned their proper nature and, by a sleight-of-hand trick, lost all their qualities and their autonomy. The unifying operation of science mutilates and impoverishes them. But this is not the case with poetry. The poet names things: these are feathers, those are stones. And suddenly he affirms, stones are feathers, this is that. The elements of the image do not lose their concrete and singular character: stones continue to be stones, rough, hard, impenetrable…. And feathers, feathers: light. The image shocks because it defies the principle of contradiction: the heavy is the light. When it enunciates the identity of opposites, it attacks the foundation of our thinking…. (pp. 85-86)

Paz (1987) continued, explaining that poets:

> In their desire to restore the philosophical dignity of the image, some do not hesitate to seek the aid of dialectical logic. In fact, many images conform to the three stages of the process: stone is one moment of reality; feather another; and from their forcible encounter springs the image, the new reality. One does not have to resort to an impossible enumeration of images in order to realize that dialectic does not encompass them all. Sometimes the first term devours the second. Other times, the second neutralizes the first. Or the third term is not

> produced and the two elements appear face to face, irreducible, hostile…. In the dialectical process stones and feathers disappear in favor of a third reality, which is no longer stones or feathers but something else. But in some images – precisely the best ones – stones and feathers continue to be what they are: this is this and that is that; and at the same time, this is that: stones are feathers, without ceasing to be stones…. (p. 86)

An extended representation of simultaneous reality may more realistically represent the lived moment of human experience than a single, fixed focus on one thing. As "illustrated" in stream of consciousness writing by Irish novelist and poet James Joyce (1882-1941), shifting, multiple foci and flowing, comingling thoughts, memories, dreams, desires, and emotions provided the raw material for Joyce's (1918-1920/1990) novel *Ulysses*:

> As we, or mother Dana, weave and unweave our bodies, Stephen said, from day to day, their molecules shuttled to an fro, so does the artist weave and unweave his image. And as the mole on my right breast is where it was when I was born, though all my body has been woven of new stuff time after time, so through the ghost of the unquiet father the image of the unliving son looks forth. In the intense instant of imagination, when the mind, Shelley said, is a fading coal, that which I was is that which I am and that which in possibility I may come to be. So in the future, the sister of the past, I may see myself as I sit here now but by reflection from that which then I shall be. (p. 183)

Later in this poetic, trance inducing novel, Joyce (1918-1920/1990) recorded the presence and action of spirits:

> In the darkness spirit hands were felt to flutter and when prayer by tantras had been directed to the proper quarter, a faint but increasing luminosity of ruby light became gradually visible, the apparition of the etheric double being particularly lifelike owing to the discharge of jivic rays from the crown of the head and face. Communication was effected through the pituitary body and also by means of the orange fiery and scarlet rays emanating from the sacral region and solar plexus. Questioned by his earthname as to his whereabouts in the heavenworld he stated that he was now on the path of pr 1 ya or return but was still submitted to trial at the hands of certain bloodthirsty entities on the lower astral levels. In reply to a question as to his first sensations in the great divide beyond he stated that previously he had seen as in a glass darkly but that those who had passed over had summit possibilities of atmic development opened up to them. (p. 290)

Shamans are known for their abilities to reconcile opposites and dissolve boundaries. As discussed earlier, Tlingit shamans are known to dissolve boundaries to achieve a state of non-duality where opposites are bound (Jonaitis, 2006), syncretically maintaining individual identities while simultaneously being united. Beyman and Kremer (2003) perceived shamans as agents of transformation, which is performed partly through connection with a flexible, creative, and nondichotomous self.

In summary, tolerance, even an embrace, of ambiguity was found in studies of individuals who are shamans, spiritual practitioners, and contemporary artists. While gratification is delayed and closure is delayed, tolerance of ambiguity allows more content, experience, knowledge to arise, collect, be considered and manipulated, while additional associations are made.

Engendered Conjunctions of Opposites

Androgyny. Ambiguity, simultaneous realities, and nonduality can also be found in the realm of androgyny where shamans and contemporary artists may participate in a kind of *conjunctio oppositorum*. In general, shamans live free of restrictive gender stereotyping. Halifax (1979) wrote of androgyny as a fusion of polarities, a dissolution of contraries, an indication of paradise where two become one.

In rituals or in daily life, some shamans wore clothing usually worn by the opposite sex. Czaplicka (1914/2004b) observed:

> Among Siberian peoples, androgynous shamans appear to be unusually prevalent…. The spirit ally, or *ke'let,* demands that the young man become a "soft man being." Womanly breasts may be represented by two iron circles on a male shaman's coat or womanly behavior may be due to the influence of a female spirit. (p. 94)

B. Tedlock (2004a) explained how shamans:

> Instead of accepting a purely feminine role, they [the shamans] describe human beings as containing a combination of masculine and feminine energies and aspects including possession of a female and a male soul, as well as membership in both a matriclan and a patriclan. They often work with both masculine and feminine forms of energy, sometimes even shape-shifting into beings of the opposite gender. The gender crossing, bending, and blending of these ritual specialists during shamanic séances and other community-wide rituals enables them to manipulate potent masculine and feminine cosmic powers. Though women shamans are nurturing, they can also be brave and powerful when they help with a difficult birth or take on the warrior's role in healing. (p. 132)

Similarly, creative individuals also have available a wide repertoire of being from traits conventionally considered masculine or feminine. Creative individuals exhibit interests considered typical of the opposite sex (McKinnon, 1962). Ekvall (1991) found that creative individuals often cross boundaries of gender roles, acquiring greater freedom and more divergent experiences. Norlander, Erixon, and Archer (2000) found that androgynes are predisposed towards creativity. In comparison with peers, creative girls are more dominant and resilient, whereas creative boys are more sensitive and less aggressive. Csikszentmihalyi (1996) wrote that psychological androgyny refers:

> …to a person's ability to be at the same time aggressive and nurturing, sensitive and rigid, dominant and submissive, regardless of gender. A psychologically androgynous person in effect doubles his or her repertoire of responses. Creative individuals are more likely to have not only the strengths of their own gender but those of the other one, too. (p. 71)

Androgyny is one of the 12 essential traits required by creativity identified by Richards (2007b) after her review of relevant literature, regardless of the field or practice in which creativity is expressed – including shamanism, artists, and, potentially, artistic shamans and shamanic artists.

Gender. The androgynous nature of shamans and their shape-shifting abilities are also expressed in a symbolic change of sex within some shamanic cultures and even,

as reported in legends about shamans, full physiological reversal of gender. Some shamanic societies recognize three or four genders (Roscoe, 2000). Shamans constitute a 3rd gender in the Canadian Inuit where gender can shift day to day or be combined in an intersex hermaphrodite (D'Anglure, 1986/1994; Ramet, 1996) with hermaphrodites often selected for training as shamans.

The Ngadju-Dayak, of Borneo, have a subcategory of hermaphroditic shamans known as *basir* (Ripensky-Naxon, 1993). Regarding the physically intersex *basir,* Ripinsky-Naxon explained:

> As a consequence of their biological (hermaphroditic) and personality (bisexual) characteristics, these shamans represent the union of the opposites – a complementary of polar biunity – of the feminine (earth) and masculine (heaven) principles. Henceforth, they are viewed as the intermediaries between the worldly and heavenly realms. (p. 84)

To express a similar, although partial, *conjunction oppositorum,* the artist Marcel Duchamp donned feminine garb to transform into Rose Selavý. For Duchamp, cross-dressing indicated an enduring interest in an androgynous ideal, where male-female balance exists, and the rational male and the intuitive female are united in non-duality (Lanier, 2002).

Czaplicka (1914) noted the gender boundary crossing abilities of shamans:

> The woman-shaman is not restricted to taboos specifically female, for her social position is much higher than that of the ordinary woman: whilst purely male taboos are not applied to the man-shaman, who has, together with certain male taboos, some privileges of a woman….

In a review of psychological theories about gender, Magnusson and Maracek (2012) observed that conventional Western society continues to classify individuals according to sex, as either male or female, although biologically and genetically more than two sexes can be identified depending on defining criteria applied.

While heteronormativity continues to be held as "the norm," Western society is slowly recognizing and accepting more categories of sexuality and gender as seen in the recent repeal of the policy against homosexuals serving openly in the United States military (Bumiller, 2011). Nonetheless, with regards to the current *DSM-IV-TR* (American Psychiatric Association, 2000), Newman (2006) commented:

> This model determines that gender-aberrant behaviour and gender variation are, by definition, pathological, and reinforces a binary gender model. Studies of non-Western cultures reveal variations in models of gender and in the understanding of gender deviance. Cultures vary in their definition of gender roles and show varying degrees of tolerance for atypical gender behaviours and gender change. An understanding of cultural context is important in the clinical assessment of a typical gender development and challenges current models of sex and gender. (p. 397)

As a subculture, subsets of contemporary artists tend to be more public about expressing unconventional or socially less accepted gender identities. There is an art movement that developed:

> A self-conscious queer art in a variety of national contexts, particularly as notions of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered) have spread around the world, meeting both acceptance and resistance as diverse people attempt to represent their lives, intimacies, and experiences. (Meem, Gibson, & Alexander, 2010, p. 232)

The American poet, Walt Whitman (1819-1892) contributed to "queer art" (Meem et al., 2010). He celebrated personal homoeroticism merged with spirituality in *Leaves of Grass* and removed the "veil" covering and silencing "voices of sexes and lusts…." (Whitman, 1855, p. 40). The poem's initial publication during the Victorian era disgusted many reviewers, with its "degrading, beastly sensuality that is fast rotting the healthy core of all the social virtues" (Griswold, 1855, p. 55).

Unlike those shamanic societies that require initiated shamans to change gender roles or dress as the opposite gender, contemporary Western society does not make the

same requirements of artists. However, a subset of contemporary artists publicly expressed sexual ways of being that are presently considered less conventional and are less accepted in some populations (Meem et al., 2010; Public Broadcasting Service (PBS), 2010-2011).

Personality: Discussion

In the data considered, many personality traits were associated with creativity. Many of these traits, perhaps most of these traits, are also considered typical of artists. Fewer personality traits were identified with regards to shamans, due to a lack of research on the personalities of shamans. The personality traits that are held in common by both shamans and artists or shamans and creative individuals include: tolerance of ambiguity, androgyny, divergent thinking, field independence, flexibility, gender variation, integration, multiple foci, ownership of cultural capital, primitive mental processes, resilience, and thinner, sometimes shifting boundaries.

A comparison of personality traits between shamans, artists, and creative individuals is presented in Table 16.

Traits associated with creativity that were not found in data considered on shamans are adaptability, analytical thinking skills, complexity, convergent thinking, curiosity, delay of gratification, high intelligence, imagination, intuition, less defensiveness, openness, originality, playfulness, preference for disorder, risk taking, sensitivity, and stimulus freedom. Although specific traits might not be mentioned by name, many of these traits could be identified through explorations of descriptions of shamans.

Table 16

Comparison of Personality Traits

Personality Traits	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Creative Individuals
Traits associated with creativity.			
Adamantly saner			Yes
Adaptability			Yes
Ambiguity	Specialists of ambiguity, deliberately engage ambiguity, fires imagination. Ambiguity can be represented as simultaneous realities and x-ray styles in forms of art.	Simultaneous realities: Expressed through juxtaposition, conflation, substitution, part for whole, inversion, doubled reading, mirroring, abstraction, interiority.	Tolerance of ambiguity
Analytical			Yes
Androgyny	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cognitive mobility			Yes
Complexity			Yes
Convergent thinking			Yes
Curiosity			Yes
Delay of gratification			Yes
Divergent thinking	Can be enhanced through practices that raise dopamine levels.		Yes
Field independence	Yes		Yes
Flexibility	Yes		Yes
Gender	Might identify as woman or man, male or female, or with 3rd or 4th gender.	Same range of gender options available in society for anyone, not just artists, although artists may be more willing to openly display behaviors considered unconventional.	Creativity is not limited to a specific gender. Creative individuals often cross boundaries of traditional gender roles through androgyny.

High intelligence		Usually above average or higher. But, conventional IQ tests do not adequately measure "right-hemisphere functions critical to intelligence in the arts" (Bryden, 2005, p. 65).	Often, usually above average.
Imaginative		Yes	Yes
Integrated, nondichotomous self.	Yes		Yes
Intuitive			Yes
Less defensiveness			Yes
More constructive			Yes
More cultivated			Yes
More destructive			Yes
More primitive			Yes
Multiple foci	Seen in shamanic arts such as Tlingit masks, representing several realities.	Seen in James Joyce's novel, *Ulysses,* and the poetry of Octavio Paz as well as many forms of art produced by societies with strong mythic consciousness.	Yes
Occasionally crazier, mental illness.	Yes, but see following section, "Intertwining Mental Health and Mental Illness."	Yes, but see following section, "Intertwining Mental Health and Mental Illness."	Yes
Openness			Yes
Originality			Yes
Ownership of cultural capital	Yes	Yes	Yes
Playfulness			Yes
Positive Disintegration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Preference for disorder			Yes
Primitive mental	Yes		Yes

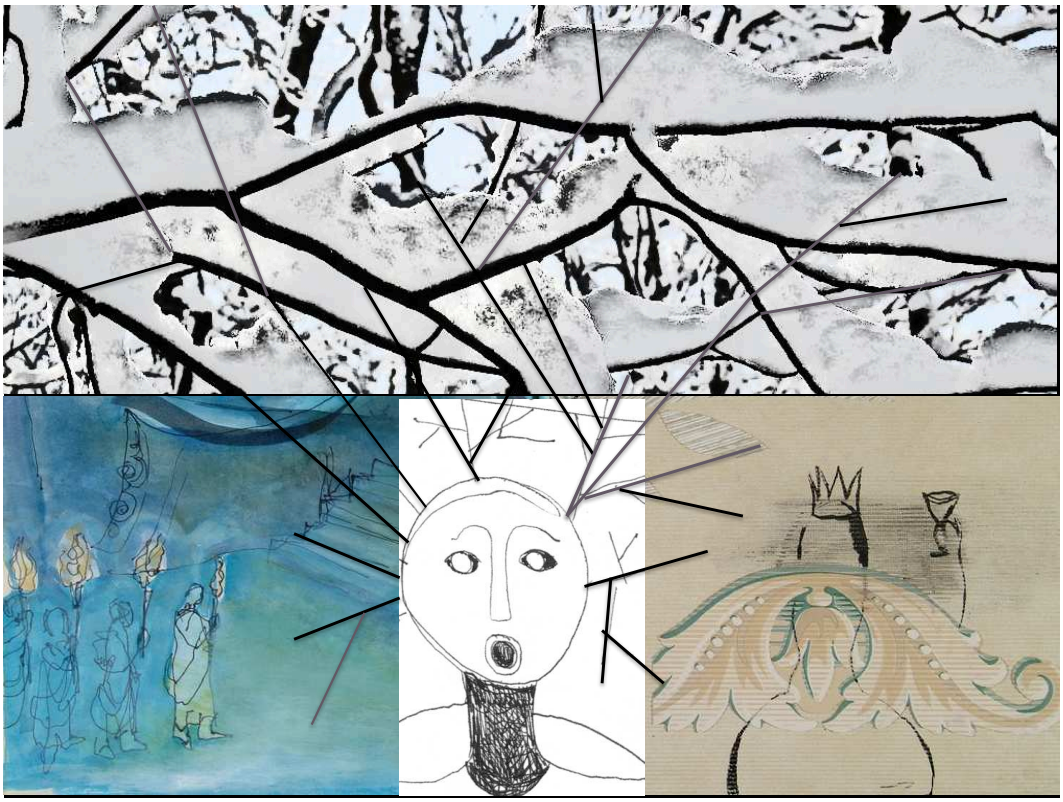
processes available			
Resilience	Yes		Yes
Risk taking			Yes
Sensitivity			Yes
Shifting boundaries	Yes		
Stimulus freedom	Yes		Yes
Traits associated with shamans.			
	In data considered, the following traits were prerequisites for becoming a shaman in specific shamanic societies.	These traits can be found in some, but not all, artists.	These traits are evident in some, but not all, creative individuals and these traits have not been linked with creativity.
Reliable worker	Yes		
Dedicated parent	Yes		
Capable community member	Yes		
Good heart	Yes		
Charismatic	Yes	Often, see Barron's (1972) study of students at the San Francisco Art Institute.	
Generativity	Yes		
Desire to benefit others.	Yes		

For example, shamans who learn herbal lore, diagnostic techniques, long legends and songs, and other knowledge transmitted during apprenticeship could be assumed to have a certain degree of intelligence that might be higher than average. The willingness to take shamanic journeys and battle with harm-causing spirits could be interpreted as risk taking.

In Chapter 5, several personality traits associated with some shamans in certain societies were found: reliable worker, dedicated parent, and capable community member, all indications of maturity. There were several indications that personality traits and levels of maturity required prior to becoming a shaman represented the developmental stage of generativity or a readiness to move into this state. While generativity is found in a subset of contemporary artists, it is not found in all artists.

Future research could use the same personality assessments on populations of artists and shamans so that valid comparisons could be made. Inasmuch as subsets of artists might be more likely to evince generativity or transliminality; there may be value in dividing artist populations into subsets for assessment and comparison.

Previously, Chapter 5 also discussed how shamans, contemporary artists, and creative individuals tend to undergo positive disintegration and have traits associated with transliminality, with signs of imagination and reports of magical or religious experiences in childhood. Transliminality was also associated with reports of paranormal experiences and purported psi abilities.



Messengers, Denita Benyshek, 2011, drawing, watercolor, collage,
from *The Opera Sketchbook*.

Purported Paranormal Paths

Shamans and Psi

Reports, observations, and explanations. A number of writers, reviewers, and researchers viewed purported paranormal experiences and psi powers as typical of shamans. For example, Millay (1999) wrote, "Psi phenomena have been natural manifestations of shamanic rituals of various cultures around the world for uncounted centuries" (p. 187).

As noted earlier in the consideration of psi talent and heritability, purported psi abilities in children are one means by which communities recognize future shamans (Chamberlain, 1896; Schmidt, 1996; Stephen & Suryani, 2000). Among the Araucanian

of South America, shamanic apprentices prayed for clairvoyant abilities that aid diagnosis with an ability to see into a patient's body (Eliade, 1951/1964).

Shamanic journeys are probably the paranormal activity most closely linked with shamans. "The pre-eminently shamanic technique is the passage from one cosmic region to another," commented Eliade (1951/1964, p. 259). Through trance states and altered states of consciousness, shamans take either metaphoric or purported paranormal journeys to other realms to gain knowledge, increase power, and help individuals and societies (Harner, 1968/1986).

Many psi phenomena have been reported to take place during shamanic journeys, such as direct mind-to-mind transference of specific visions, spirit communication, psychokinetic events, out-of-the-body experiences, and dramatic, instantaneous, spiritual healing (Rabeyron & Watt, 2010).

Some shamanic communities believe their shamans are capable of precognition, telepathy, clairvoyance, levitation, divination, changing weather, identifying criminals, being immune to fire, finding lost objects, spirit communication, psychically learning about secrets in the community, and/or seeing souls of the dead and hearing their conversations (Eliade, 1951/1964; Kalweit, 1992; Krippner, 2000; Rogo, 1990). Hild (2007) described the Inuit *ilisiilaq* as "the clairvoyant seer, the shaman, the one who can attain nonlocal consciousness, the holographic universe traveler" (p. 246).

An autobiographical, phenomenological account of paranormal phenomena and shamanism was provided by Malidoma Patrice Somé (1994), a Dugara shaman from present day Burkina Faso in western Africa. Somé also holds doctoral degrees in political

science and literature. He shared descriptions of supposed paranormal phenomena that accompanied his shamanic apprenticeship, initiation, and practice.

In another autobiographical account, anthropologist/shamanic apprentice Barbara Tedlock (2005) used a matter-of-fact tone to describe a series of events that she believed demonstrated the psi abilities of her beloved Ojibwe grandmother, Nokomis. From Saskatchewan, Nokomis reportedly knew of Tedlock's severe childhood illness in Washington, D.C. – prior to receiving the news from the family. An experienced shaman, the grandmother later treated Tedlock's poliomyelitis successfully. Then, through dreams, Nokomis revealed Tedlock's own future practice of shamanism on the medicine path.

With regards to phenomenological accounts of paranormal experiences or psi abilities, Krippner (2005) commented:

> A phenomenological account is not evidential because it lacks the controls necessary to rule out prevarication, memory distortion, self-deception, and the like. However, there are very few accounts as graphic and as detailed as that offered by Somé. Obtaining a shaman's 'inner' view of a potentially parapsychological experience is a unique opportunity that should be encouraged by future investigators. (p. 158)

Reviews and experimental studies. In a review, Rogo (1996) observed that purported psi abilities of shamans appear to be cross-cultural in that the same abilities are reported in many shamanic societies. Yet, few researchers designed formal experimental studies to assess the psi abilities of shamans.

Krippner (2005b) performed a critical review of parapsychology research on shamans. His review included controlled observations (Bogoras, 1907; Boshier, 1974; Laubscher, 1938) and experimental studies (Giesler, 1986; Rose, 1956; Saklani, 1988). Krippner identified weaknesses in studies confirming psi abilities of shamans as well as

studies disconfirming shamanic psi abilities. He also recognized that results from experimental studies of shamanlike psi abilities are "neither compelling nor conclusive, but there were a few provocative results" (p. 156).

Furthermore, Krippner (2005b) noted important recommendations for experimental research methodology proposed by Giesler (1986). These suggestions included research methods that would integrate "psi-relevant contexts in native cultures," "psi-in-process" methods, and combined "ethnographic and experimental methodologies" (Krippner, 2005b, p. 156).

Nonetheless, most experimental studies of psi abilities relied on passive processes, often utilizing the Ganzfeld design (see Storm & Rock, 2011). This method usually involves a research participant who is a passive recipient. The recipient sees a "homogeneous visual field" (Rao, 2001, p. 34) and, sometimes, hears pink noise through headphones (Rao). As a result, during Ganzfeld, the recipient sees and hears consistent, unchanging stimuli for 30 minutes (generally).

During this time, the recipient verbally reports whatever thoughts occur. The verbal descriptions are recorded. At the same time, a researcher or second research participant actively attempts to transmit a target picture to the recipient from a separate, isolated location (Rao, 2001). The recipient is not actively attempting to receive or see the sent picture and does not employ technologies that might enhance purported psi abilities.

At the end of the Ganzfeld period, the recipient ranks four pictures based on correspondence to the recipient's mental images during the Ganzfeld. Statistical analysis

is applied to the picture ranking to determine the degree of matching with the target picture (Rao, 2001).

The Ganzfeld method remains questionable for many reasons. Ganzfeld designs might not produce alternate states of consciousness (Alvarado, 1998; Braud, 2005; Hyman, 2010; Scimeca, Boca, & Iannuzo, 2011) – similar to states voluntarily entered by shamans – and might not be psi-conducive (Alvarado, 1998; Braud, 2005; Hyman, 2010; Scimeca et al., 2011).

Ganzfeld does not replicate technologies used by shamans to invoke purported paranormal experiences or deliberately manipulate purported psi abilities – skills that many shamanic candidates supposedly develop during apprenticeship (see Eliade, 1951/1964; Jonaitis, 1986; Krippner, 1991; Lafitau, 1724/2004). In addition, passive processes such as the Ganzfeld design do not replicate active shamanic technologies that supposedly result in paranormal phenomena (Storm & Rock, 2011). Ganzfeld methods are substantially different from a shaman's deliberate manipulation of purported psi abilities through actions such as performing rituals (B. Tedlock, 2005), wearing masks (Swanton, 1904-1905), ingesting entheogens (Fridman, 2003), and monotonous dancing, drumming, and chanting (Previc, 2011).

Experimental Image Cultivation and Shamanlike Psi Abilities. Storm and Rock (2011) designed an experimental study of image cultivation and shamanlike psi abilities based on their understanding of methodological problems inherent in the Ganzfeld method. They also recognized the importance of studying shamanic technologies used to control purported psi abilities.

Storm and Rock (2011) designed an experimental study to investigate "components of the shamanic-like journeying protocol that may facilitate psi hitting" (p. 75).

The journeying method was adapted from Harner's (1968/1986) book, *The Way of the Shaman.* Guided visualization was accompanied by monotonous drumming. The control group did not hear instructions on how to take a journey and did not hear drumming. Psi ability was measured by "direct hits"; that is, accurately identifying, through a ranking system, the appearance of a picture hidden in an envelope.

Noteworthy results included:

- Significant "psi effect could be induced by a shamanic-like 'journeying' condition" (p. 73).
- "The direct hit rate is above chance for participants in the shamanic-like condition" (p. 37).
- "Participants in the shamanic-like condition will perform better than participants in the control condition on direct hits" (p. 38).
- "There is a positive relationship between paranormal belief… and direct hits" (p. 38).
- The relationship between transliminality and direct hits "was positive, but extremely weak and not significant" (p. 38).
- Success at psi tasks was not associated with thin mental boundaries.
- Deliberate cultivation of visual imagery accompanying journeying was associated with alterations in states of awareness, perception, associations, states of consciousness, experience, meaning, and body image, "consistent with the notion

that during ‘journeys’ the shaman’s self is experienced as a ‘soul’ distinct from the physical body” (p. 69).

- Participants in the shamanic-like journey tended to interpret their experience as meaningful in a spiritual, religious, or sacred way, perhaps due to aspects of the method that might connote ritual or ceremony.

Storm and Rock (2011) used a convenience population. Most participants were solicited at a university in Australia. Traditional shamans were not invited to participate in the study. How many study participants came from traditional shamanic cultures is unknown. Perhaps members of traditional shamanic societies scored differently than nonmember participants.

As differentiated within this dissertation, the journey undertaken by each participant in the Storm and Rock (2011) study was *shamanlike,* not *shamanic.* Some necessary constructs used to define *shaman* within this dissertation were absent. Participants were not socially designated shamans and were not identified as spiritual practitioners. Instead of voluntarily regulating their own attention throughout the journey, participants followed instructions. Also, participants did not obtain information to benefit their community – except to the extent that they contributed to an experimental study that might benefit research communities.

Results from the study are suggestive, but do not represent results that might be obtained from socially designated shamans who displayed purported psi talents during childhood, studied techniques to control and develop purported psi talents during apprenticeship, and mastered purported psi technologies. Results from a convenience population cannot be generalized onto masters of shamanic technologies. Certainly this

indicates the need for future research that makes the effort needed to recruit shamans as research subjects in rigorously designed experimental studies.

Nonetheless, Storm and Rock (2011) recognized that imagery cultivation might redirect parapsychology research away from the Ganzfeld method towards methods that are more similar to shamanic practices. Based on the findings of Storm and Rock, it appears that "psi may be elicited using *imagery cultivation techniques*" (p. 73). "We argue, therefore, that the conditions under which psi can be elicited are perhaps more phenomenologically variable than we yet know or fully understand" (p. 74).

Artists and Psi

Cardeña, Iribas-Rudin, and Reijman (2012) presented a review of purported paranormal experiences in the lives and creative processes of artists. Whether passively received or actively sought, these experiences served as sources of inspiration, provided information important to creative processes, and became important elements in artistic themes, subjects, and plots. Artists mentioned included thought-photographer Ted Serios, film director Andrei Tarkovsky, poet and children's writer Ted Hughes, playwright Victorien Sardou, composer and librettist Gian Carlo Menotti, painter František Kupka, novelist George Eliot, writer André Breton, novelist Stanislaw Lem, performance artist Marina Abramović, visual artist Andrej Tisma, painter Victor Brauner, playwright and poet Federico Garcia Lorca, painter Ingo Swann, novelist Charles Dickens, poet William Butler Yeats, poet Ruth Stone, and this researcher.

The Cardeña et al. (2012) overview described how artists engaged in forms of divination, participated in séances, attempted remote sending and viewing, and revealed socially repressed elements of the *Zeitgeist.* Various artists believed they beheld visions,

could foresee the future, channeled the creative spirit of deceased artists, underwent possession as mediums, or communicated telepathically.

Experimental studies and research reviews also considered the purported psi abilities of artists. An early study of psi abilities found especially talented individuals were artistic and without psychopathology (Rhine, 1935). In two subsequent studies, artists consistently performed better than nonartists in tests of psi abilities (Dalton, 1997; Moss, 1969) with Dalton's study utilizing the Ganzfeld protocol. Bem and Honorton (1994) reviewed 20 years of research on telepathy, comprised of studies that primarily employed the Ganzfeld method. Not only did the review present evidence regarding the existence of telepathy, the researchers also found many connections between psi abilities and artists.

A review by Holt, Delanoy, and Roy (2004) considered 27 experimental studies conducted between 1962 and 2003. In these studies, artists scored higher in psi-conductive abilities than general populations; however, the reviewers questioned the results. The "interpretation that this psi-success is due to the creativeness of the participants is questionable - it is confounded by other potential characteristics of these populations, such as extraversion, self-confidence, open-belief systems or a willingness to introspect" as well as the "experimenter effect" (Holt et al., p. 433).

A Ganzfeld study of receiver telepathy abilities used a small population of music, dance, and drama students at the Julliard School. "The Julliard students achieved a significant success rate of 50%, double the chance expectations of 25%," which was "significantly superior to the… general population" (Schlitz & Honorton, 1992, p. 82).

Eight music students "demonstrated the most outstanding performance" (Schlitz & Honorton, p. 82), achieving a success rate of 75%.

William Blake. Poet and visionary artist William Blake (1757-1827) reported experiencing many visions during childhood, starting at age four. Blake saw God at the window, an angel-filled tree, and Christ and the Apostles (Damon, 1924). Blake's purported visions played an important role in his development as an artist.

An early biographer of Blake, Thomas Wright (1929/2003), recounted how Blake's purported visions played an important role in his development as an artist. When Blake finished writing his book of poems, *Songs of Innocence* (1789/1971), he did not know how to publish the poems because "Blake had neither money nor serviceable friends, so he had recourse to prayer" (p. 33). Wright continued:

> Then his [deceased] brother Robert appeared to him, and revealed a simple method for multiplying works of art. He was to execute the text and the accompanying design on copper and in reverse, in a medium impervious to acid. The plates were next to be placed in aqua fortis, whereupon the parts untouched would be eaten away, while the text and design would stand out in bold relief. The page could then be coloured by hand in imitation of the original drawings. As soon as the vision vanished, he sent out Mrs. Blake with their only half-crown to purchase the materials. Then 'Joseph the sacred Carpenter' appeared, and told him to grind the colours on a piece of marble, mix them with thin glue, and apply them with a camel's-hair brush. (p. 33)

As a result, the poems were published using a new method for copper plate etching, heightened with hand tinted color, and the bound by Catherine Blake, the poet's wife (Douglas, 1910).

Blake continued experiencing vivid dreams and visions throughout his life and into advanced age. He reported numerous visits and communications from his beloved brother, Robert. "In hours of solitude and inspiration his [Robert's] form would appear

and speak to the poet in consolatory dream, in warning or helpful vision" (Gilchrist, 1863, p. 68).

The Great Red Dragon and the Woman Clothed in the Sun, William Blake, 1805-1810

> Now I a fourfold vision see,
> And a fourfold vision is given to me;
> 'Tis fourfold in my supreme delight,
> And threefold in soft Beulah's night,
> And twofold always. May God us keep
> From single vision, and Newton's sleep.
>
> William Blake, in a letter written November 22, 1802
> (Damon, 1924, p. 198)

Although Blake is not a typical contemporary artist, Blake's reports of psi experience are similar to those reported by some shamans. Blake reported seeing the

spirit of someone who was deceased and purportedly experienced visions of spirits providing guidance and advice regarding technological methods.

Creativity and Psi

Purported psi abilities were also found more frequently in subjects scoring higher on creativity tests (Schmeidler, 1964), with traits of intrapersonal awareness, emotional creativity, "heightened internal awareness (e.g., paying attention to visual imagery and emotions)," "non-linear cognition," and "artistic writing and the visual arts" (Holt et al., 2004, p. 435). Professional artists scored higher than scientists and all other professions; although, "Participants who practiced a mental discipline (e.g., meditation, prayer, yoga, martial arts) scored significantly higher than those who did not on the intrapersonal awareness dimension of creativity only" (p. 435).

In conclusion, the researchers suggested that markers of creativity, such as cognitive flexibility, divergent thinking, personality, or certain creative domains, are not associated with psi experience. Instead, "openness to and exploration of psychological space" increases the likelihood of paranormal experience" (Holt et al., 2004, p. 435), as does "internal sensitivity" (Honorton, 1972).

Such sensitivity to experience, perhaps due to thinner mental boundaries, is more common in artists as compared to other professions (Hartmann, 1991). Boundaries between self and others, between different psychological states or states of consciousness (Hartmann), access to paranormal phenomena (Houran, Thalbourne, & Hartmann, 2003), imagination and perception is attributed to the subjective experience of thinner boundaries (see Cardeña & Terhune, 2008). Yet, while unusual experiences, trauma, and

negative life experiences are also associated with boundary thinness; these experiences do not affect psi performance (Honorton, 1972).

Recent studies discovered that cognitive, as opposed to affective, aspects of creativity correlated with paranormal experiences (Holt et al., 2004). Holt (2007) concluded that "cognitive flexibility and originality was significantly associated with magnitude of the psi-effect" (p. 2) and that creative ideas felt to originate 'beyond the self' (p. 15), from a transpersonal source, were associated with psi.

With regards to the relationship between paranormal experiences and creativity, two studies are of particular interest. Thalbourne and Delin (1994) tested beliefs in paranormal phenomena, mystical experiences, and magical ideation as associated with schizotypy and bipolar tendencies. Not only did paranormal beliefs and experiences correlate with all other variables, "the six variables all correlated positively and significantly *with each other*" (Thalbourne, 2009, p. 120). With regards to this constellation of interrelationships, it is worth noting that bipolar (Richards et al., 1997; Schuldberg, 1990; Soeiro-de-Souza et al., 2011; Stanford University Medical Center, 2002) and schizophrenia (Biello, 2005; Karlsson, 1970; Kinney et al., 2000-2001; Miller & Tal, 2007; Richards, 2000-2001) spectrum disorders are also associated with heightened creativity. It is also important to keep in mind that the associations between personality disorders and creativity are often found in first-degree familial relatives and/or in partial and subclinical expressions of symptoms not qualifying for psychopathological diagnosis. These relationships and topics are explored later in this chapter.

An earlier study (Thalbourne, 1998) found significant, positive correlations between paranormal beliefs, mystical experiences, creative personality, manic experience, magical ideation, absorption, fantasy proneness, positive attitude toward dream interpretation, and hyperaesthesia (p. 121) – qualities that are typical of many artists and shamans.

Hyperaesthesia, "hypersensitivity to environmental stimulation" (Thalbourne, 2009, p. 121), was found in participant reports and was associated with transliminality:

> Very concrete sensory experiences such as being overwhelmed by smells, being bothered by bright lights, and an inability to shut out a heightened awareness of sights and sounds….transliminality manifests itself not only in people's subjective beliefs, but that it affects the thresholds of the perceptual system's interaction with the outside world. (p. 123)

If paranormal experiences and skills do exist, perhaps hyperaesthesia also facilitates access to paranormal sources of information, heightening sensitivity to psi phenomena. Hyperaesthesia is linked to experiences of "haunts," that is, "inexplicable experiences of apparitions, sounds, smells, sensed presences, bodily sensations, and physical manifestations in the environment" (Houran, Wiseman, & Thalbourne, 2002, p. 17).

Purported Paranormal Paths: Discussion

When shamanic communities believe they observe psi abilities in a child, such talents are often seen as signs of a future shaman. Some shamanic apprentices attempt to strengthen their psi abilities through established techniques. There are numerous reports of shamans voluntarily using psi abilities and paranormal experiences to access knowledge. These ways are not typically available to non-shamans in a community. Although members of a shamanic community may experience hearing spirits, their relationships with purported spirits are not as sophisticated, developed, or controlled as a

shaman's relationships with purported spirits. For example, an initiated shaman might undertake a journey to spirit realms, another paranormal way unavailable to the community.

Creativity was associated with paranormal experiences in a few studies while other experimental studies found professional artists scored higher in purported psi abilities such as telepathy. More extensive data on purported paranormal experiences and practices of some shamans and selected contemporary artists, regarding divination, ritual, and occult practices, was presented previously in Chapter 6, "Spiritual Practitioners." Chapter 6 also shared reports, from shamans and contemporary artists, of relationships with spirits, including ghosts, artistic precognition, possession, divine inspiration, mythic consciousness, and animistic beliefs.

From an empirical perspective, Wilson and Barber (1983) named a constellation of traits and reported experiences as the fantasy prone personality (FPP), including purported visitations from apparitions, messages from divinity, childhood magical/religious experiences, or seeing what others could not. Certainly, many of the anecdotal reports of paranormal experiences from shamans and contemporary artists could be seen as signs of a fantasy prone personality.

Wilson and Barber questioned the reality testing of fantasy prone individuals, and from this point of view, all reports from shamans and artists about paranormal experiences and psi abilities could be interpreted as indications of poor reality testing – when the reality that is being tested is limited to consensual reality. In contrast, researchers from shamanic cultures, such as Barbara Tedlock, accepted the veridicality of paranormal aspects of shamanism she experienced.

Definitive conclusions about purported paranormal experiences and psi abilities are not yet possible. Nonetheless, we can keep in mind studies that found a higher degree of purported psi abilities reported in artists (Bem & Honorton, 1994) and creative individuals (Holt et al., 2004) due to certain personality traits (Holt et al.; Honorton, 1972; Thalbourne, 1998), significant associations between shamans, purported psi abilities, and image cultivation (Storm & Rock, 2011); and multidirectional relationships between purported paranormal experiences, hypersensitivity, and transliminality (Houran et al., 2002; Thalbourne, 2009). From these results, as summarized in Table 17, we can see emerging patterns that reveal relationships and present many opportunities for future research.

Table 17

Experiences, Purported Psi Abilities, and Associated Traits Found in Subsets of Shamans, Artists, and/or Creative Individuals

	Shamans	Artists	Creative Individuals
Psi abilities believed to have occurred during childhood.	Sometimes. Might be interpreted as calling to shamanism.	Occasionally, perhaps rarely.	Not found
Psi abilities developed, invoked, or improved by prayer or other activities.	Yes, including prayer, chanting, drumming, dancing, solitude, fasting, and use of entheogens.	Occasionally. Seen in artists such as William Blake, Victor Hugo, James Merrill, and Lauren Raine.	Not found. However, prayer is a common activity for members of religious organizations.
Purported psi abilities.	Yes	Yes. In experimental studies of psi abilities, artists scored higher than control populations or other vocations.	Yes. Highly creative individuals achieve higher scores on purported psi abilities than less creative individuals.
Types of psi abilities.			
Changing weather	Yes	Not found	Not found
Clairvoyance	Yes	Yes	Not found

Divination	Yes	Yes. See Chapter 6, "Spiritual Practice." Artists include Enjai and Amnue Eele.	Not found
Finding lost objects.	Yes	Not found	Not found
Hearing conversations of the dead, communicating with someone who is deceased.	Yes	Yes, either during visions of deceased individual or when channeling creative spirit of deceased individual.	Not found
Ghosts and hauntings.	Yes	Yes, in small subset of artists including Louse Erdrich. For artists such as Susan Hiller, ghosts are metaphorical remnants of history.	More likely to occur in association with hyperaesthesia.
Ideas from transpersonal sources.	Yes	Found in a subset of artists such as Norval Morrisseau, Kim Kum Hwa, William Blake, Hilma alf Klint, James Merrill, Harriet Beecher Stowe, Alex Grey.	In a subset of creators. See Funk (2000) and Holt (2007).
Identifying criminals	Yes	Not found	Not found
Image cultivation	Yes	Yes	Not found, but likely.
Immune to fire	Yes	Not found	Not found
Inspiration from spirits.	Yes	Yes, Hilma alf Klint and Leodardi.	Not found
Journeying to different realms.	Yes	Yes, Paul Cezanne, Pablo Amaringo, Kim Kum Hwa.	Not found
Levitation	Yes	Not found	Not found
Nonlocal consciousness.	Yes	Yes, including Alex Grey and Lauren Raine. Can include the art spirit and a sense of the *Zeitgeist.*	In a subset of creators who access transcendent consciousness or achieve self-actualization with accompanying peak or plateau experiences.
Precognition	Yes	Yes	Not found, may be more likely in creators than in general population.

Psi-conductivity	Yes, as seen in Mande blacksmith-shamans channeling *nyama.*	Yes, reported by artists and studied in experiments.	Yes. Apparently more likely found in highly creative individuals compared to general population.
Psychokinesis	Yes	Not found	Not found
Seeing souls of the dead	Yes	Found in small subset of artists including William Blake.	Not found
Spirit communication	Yes	Yes, including artists who were animists (e.g., Constantin Brancusi) or believed in the art spirit (e.g., Robert Henri, Wassily Kandinsky). Includes artists who served as channels (Shaker artists) or underwent voluntary or involuntary spirit possession.	Not found
Telepathy	Yes	Yes. Julliard students in the arts achieved significant results compared to general population.	Not found
Visions	Yes	Yes	Not found
Voluntary spirit possession	Yes	Not found	Not found
Associated Traits			
Absorption Cognition	Yes	Yes	Yes. Cognitive flexibility strengthens purported psi-affect.
Fantasy prone	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hyperaesthesia	Likely, but not found.	Likely, but not found.	Yes
Imagination	Yes, as related to imaginal realities and autonomous imagination.	Yes	Yes

Magical thinking	Yes	Often	Magical thinking is typical of creativity associated with schizophrenic spectrum disorders.
Mysticism	Yes	Yes	Sometimes, associated with self-actualization.
Originality	Not found but can be inferred from reports regarding shamans.	Yes	Yes
Thinner boundaries	Yes	Yes	Yes
Transliminality	Yes	Yes	Yes

We Can See Emerging Patterns, Denita Benyshek, 2012, photo montage.

Intertwining Trails: Mental Health, Mental Illness, and Creativity

A Book of Cures and Prayers, Denita Benyshek, 2011, watercolor and photo montage.

Many previous studies assessed the mental health or mental illness of shamans, artists, geniuses, or creative individuals. Many studies dichotomized mental health and mental illness, finding one or the other, within the populations studied. Later studies considered spectrums of mental health and psychopathology, arriving at more complex and nuanced conclusions.

Results of studies were determined by research designs including which populations were selected for assessment, definitions of creativity and genius, types of assessment instruments utilized, diagnostic categories considered, and emic versus etic perspectives. These methods make broadly generalized conclusions problematic. Simple

comparisons between shamans and contemporary artists, *vis*-à-*vis* data from studies on creativity and mental health or mental illness, are potentially misleading.

Instead, when looking at the range of data available, patterns emerged, fluid, undulating, complex relationships that paradoxically involved mental health *and* mental illness, in shamans and artists, genius and everyday creativity, rippling outwards within concentric circles of individual, societal, and cultural creativity manifested in many different contexts, in response to many different problems, solved at many different levels, and applied in many different realms.

Volumes have been written about these many patterns and relationships. Instead of a complete review of the literature on the associations between mental health, mental illness, shamans, artists, genius, and creativity, I instead offer a few representative highlights. I recognize that these examples do not adequately portray the entire breadth of research on these topics. I consider a few trajectories of research and start the process of considering what we might learn from watching the *pas de deux* of mental illness and mental health on the stage of this dissertation.

Even so, the report on this duet is not brief for two reasons. First, some researchers misinterpreted ideas or findings of earlier studies and then applied these misinterpretations to artists, shamans, or creative individuals. Second, a review of key studies is required for the sake of advancing a fuller understanding. Third, this approach provides a critical review and sets an example for future research.

Data regarding shamans is considered, followed by historically important studies on inspiration, genius, creative writers and poets, and everyday creativity as well as bipolar and schizophrenia spectrum disorders.

Journeys through Mental Illness to Mentally Healthy Shaman

Early opinions on the mental health and mental illness of shamans can be extracted from reports of anthropologists, priests, or explorers who were not trained diagnosticians and were occasionally biased. A few later studies made broad conclusions based on small clinical populations. At other times, researchers misapplied cross-disciplinary research. Recently, a few rigorously designed studies were performed to assess the mental health of shamans.

Lafitau (1724/2004) wrote of shamans as "sages" (p. 23), conventional, yet extraordinary, individuals with "important status" and social "esteem" (p. 24). In contrast, some reports from the early 20th century associated shamans with mental illness (see Bogoras, 1904/2004; Czaplicka, 1914/2004a).

Later, one psychiatrist diagnosed a small, clinical population of shamans as schizophrenics (Devereaux, 1961, 1969) and generalized this finding onto all shamans. However, a concurrent study (Boyer et al., 1964), comparing the mental health of Apache shamans to nonshamans and "pseudoshamans" (i.e. tribal members who claimed to be shamans but who were not recognized as shamans by their community), found that shamans were "healthier than their societal co-members" (p. 179).

In a book-length review that included the mental health status of shamans, Ripinsky-Naxon (1993) concluded, "The world of… a mentally dysfunctional individual is disintegrated. On the other hand, just the opposite may be said about a shaman" (p. 104). Vitebsky (1995) offered his opinion, based on his understanding of the literature as well as his observations of shamans, writing:

> The surest argument for seeing shamans as being basically psychologically sound is that the community could not otherwise entrust them with the protection of its

> own mental health and livelihood…. The shaman's mental strength comes from an expanded experience of mental disturbance. The initiation is a controlled disintegration, which is always followed by reintegration into someone more powerful and more whole. The shamanic personality is molded by the culture and shamans are 'mad' by courtesy of the culture and on the terms of that culture. It is ultimately society, which distinguishes between the behavior of the shaman and that of the schizophrenic or psychotic. One becomes a hero, the other a hospital patient. The shaman lives on the bring of the abyss but has the means to avoid falling in. (p. 139)

Two additional reviews concluded that shamans, as a group, are mentally healthy (see Noll, 1983; Walsh, 2007). Recently, a well-designed study of Bhutanese refugees in Nepal found "no evidence that shamanism is an expression of psychopathology" (van Ommeren et al., 2004, p. 313).

In general, as seen in Krippner's (2002a) overview of the conflicting opinions regarding the mental health and mental illness of shamans, the various reports, opinions, and diagnoses tend to be polarized: shamans are mentally ill *or* shamans are mentally healthy. A longer view of the process through which a shaman is created, including a systems view of family functioning, might reveal less polarity and even transit and transformation through both states. In addition, some types of psychopathology can be expressed within a spectrum that spans from severe disability to high functioning. Moreover, shamanic societies have cultural constructs, beliefs, and practices that interpret "symptoms" differently than Western medicine.

Symptoms of schizotypy, including magical ideation and unusual experiences such as purported psi phenomena, can be found in reports describing practicing shamans. Instead of interpreting these symptoms as psychopathology, shamanic communities generally believe these traits and experiences represent socially valued shamanic talents and skills.

Korean *shin-byung* (spirit possession/divine illness). Korean *shin-byung,* literally "spirit (*shin*) possession (*byung*)" or "divine illness" (Legerski, 2006, p. 144) is a culture-bound syndrome affecting shamanic candidates.

Initially, in a chronically stressed family, stress concentrates and collects in the family's "lightening rod," usually a female member. Then, she suffers a variety of somatic and psychological dysfunction symptoms result, including "anxiety and somatic complaints such as weakness, dizziness, fear, loss of appetite, insomnia, and gastrointestinal problems" (Legerski, 2006, p. 144). These symptoms of shamanic calling can last for protracted periods, even decades.

Spirits reportedly appear to the candidate during trance, hallucinations, purported visions, or dreams. Supposedly, spirits call to the candidate and ask for permission to enter (Legerski, 2006). The candidate may seek help from a psychiatrist, physician, or shaman (Legerski), but treatment is unsuccessful. Eventually, the candidate feels the spirit enter and take possession (Legerski). According to traditional Korean beliefs, shamanic illnesses can only be cured by two acts: accepting the presence of the ancestral spirit and committing to become a shaman (Legerski).

Anxiety, trance, hallucinations, and purported spirit possession are part of the process of becoming a Korean shaman. A candidate's long period of psychological and physiological imbalance is required so that a shaman can eventually bring balance to self, family, and community.

Furthermore, compared to most women in traditional Korean society, an initiated female shaman enjoys more independence, authority, economic autonomy, and

professional identity (Legerski, 2006). These signs of high functioning can be interpreted as markers of mental health.

Balinese shamans and autonomous imagination. She recognized that:

> What we are pointing to is a gray area wherein Western cultural assumptions about ego boundaries and hallucinatory experience has led to a pathologizing of experience which other cultures continue to value and to foster. (p. 36)

A socially emic perspective on the mental health and mental illness of shamans was applied by two researchers, Michele Stephen, professor of anthropology at La Trobe University in Melbourne, Australia, and Luh Ketut Suryani, a Balinese psychiatrist and former head of the Department of Psychiatry at Udayana University, Indonesia. Their study (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) assessed a sample of 108 balian (Balinese shamans).

The shamans reported that, during childhood, they had unusual abilities, with visions of special companions, hearing voices, and experiencing extrasensory perceptions (ESP). In the medical model, these symptoms would likely lead to diagnoses of psychosis. As Stephen and Suryani (2000) explained:

> When the balian's life histories are examined in detail, it becomes evident that the pattern of disturbance described is in fact far closer to chronic psychosis, or schizophrenia – with early onset, and with disturbance existing over several years. The superficial resemblance to the course of schizophrenia is of the greatest importance since...from the perspective of Western diagnostic categories, the balian described in this article prior to their taking up the vocation could be identified as schizophrenic, meeting all the major criteria of delusions, hallucinations and disturbed behavior (according to both ICD-10; DSM-IV). (p. 20)

But, instead of treating the candidates as mentally ill, the shamanic community understood these symptoms as a calling to shamanism. Instead of being "tortured by feelings of worthlessness" (Stephen & Suryani, p. 23) or suffering from the stigma of mental illness, the balian candidates had a sense of special election.

There was another distinction between the balian candidates and individuals who were mentally ill with psychotic symptoms. When someone is psychotic and spontaneous remission occurs, all "major symptoms of the disease, such as hallucinations, cease – as was found to be the case" with Balinese suffering from acute psychosis (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 22). In contrast, for "the balian there is no remission of the hallucinations or delusions; these continue, and in fact become the basis of the person's new calling" (Stephen & Suryani, p. 22). These shamans gained voluntary control over the hallucinations so that they could "be accessed at will via appropriate ritual...the visions and voices now bring positive help and advice, *and special abilities,* above all to heal" (p. 26).

A minority, only 18 out of 108, balian studied experienced initiatory madness. This subset of candidates suffered yet, at the same time, maintained contact with consensual reality and continued to function as respectable adults who used organized thought processes.

Instead of shamanic initiation involving a psychopathological disintegration of self, as described by Silverman (1967), there was an "emergence and integration into consciousness of a special capacity for imagery thought " (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 6) through autonomous imagination. Earlier, Stephen (1997) had proposed the concept of "autonomous imagination" as a "framework for cross-cultural interpretations of inner experience such as dreams, waking visions, trance, spirit possession and mediumship, and shamanistic and meditative states" (p. 26). She (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) later explained:

> Autonomous imagination is characterized by: a) being more freely and richly inventive than ordinary thought; b) emerging into conscious awareness in the

> form of vivid hallucinatory imagery which is experienced as an external reality; c) possessing a more extensive access to memory; d) exhibiting a special sensitivity to external cues and direction which enables communication to and from deeper levels of the mind, while bypassing conscious awareness, and; e) possessing a capacity to influence somatic and intrapsychic processes usually beyond conscious control.
>
> These features emphasize its creative potential; those who have access to this special mode of thought have ways of knowing and understanding things not readily available to others. (p. 36)

Autonomous imagination is also

> A continuous stream of imagery thought taking place in the mind, although mostly outside conscious awareness. At regular intervals, it spontaneously enters consciousness in the form of sleep dreams; and under certain conditions, which, like dreams, are associated with high cortical arousal combined with low sensory input, it may result in waking visions and other hallucinations. Dreams and hallucinations are usually experienced as taking place independently of a person's conscious invention or will. But with special training, it becomes possible to deliberately access the continuous stream of imagery thought, bring it into consciousness and even direct its unfolding, as we find occurring in the controlled trances of shamanism and meditative practices, in Western hypnosis, Jungian "active imagination," and many other Western imagery-based psychotherapies. This special imaginative mode possesses certain important qualities which not only distinguish it from thought and imagination controlled by ego consciousness, but also suggest capacities beyond those normally available to consciousness. (Stephen, 1997, pp. 5-6)

Differing from regressive and maladaptive primary process thinking, autonomous imagination operates continually "outside consciousness" as "part of the normal information processing procedures of the mind dealing not with sensory perceptions but inner stimuli" (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 26). The results of this study led Stephen and Suryani to distinguish between psychosis and a calling to shamanism. The differences were seen "both emically in terms of cultural understandings, and etically in terms of objective criteria" (Stephen & Suryani, p. 5).

Social support: Key moderating factor for shamans? In shamanic societies, social support appears to be a key moderating factor in the relationship between

psychopathology and creativity. Certain behaviors, beliefs, and experiences – that in a Western medical model might be viewed as symptoms of psychopathology – are interpreted by shamanic societies as signs of socially valuable special talents or powers that indicate a calling to shamanism and do not necessarily indicate mental illness.

Recently, a well designed study (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) in Bali found that during childhood, behaviors and experiences of future shamans could qualify as psychosis per diagnostic criteria of the *DSM-IV-TR* published by the American Psychiatric Association (2000). However, from a culturally emic perspective, the candidates for shamanism were considered special and valuable by their communities. The minority experiencing shamanic illness was able to continuing functioning as adults.

Stephen and Suryani (2000) and Legerski (2006) found transient periods of apparent mental illness were experienced as a necessary stage in becoming a shaman. Instead of symptoms disappearing, the symptoms were transformed and became ways for shamans to access information. In Bali, shamanic apprentices developed voluntary control over visions and hallucinations partly through autonomous imagination. Shamanic candidates in South Korea (Legarski, 2006) also experienced many symptoms of mental and physical illness that were later cured by accepting the calling. These patterns of symptoms, training, and transformation are in contemporary Western society.

A shamanic apprentice might learn established techniques for voluntarily controlling most of the symptoms. Later, in service to community, an initiated shaman can deliberately practices these techniques in a socially important role. The symptoms, signs, calling, training, and application of shamanic technologies provide many ways for

shamans to obtain information. Figure 20 illustrates the stages in this process. These ways are typically unavailable to community members who are not shamans.

Moreover, these ways are not readily available for most contemporary artists unless they are from a traditional shamanic society. There are no formal, socially understood techniques or structured education systems that teach artists how to voluntarily control psychotic symptoms. Not only might society stigmatize or ostracize individuals with psychotic symptoms, there is little social value placed on material arising during episodes of psychosis – although the growing appreciation of outsider art is an exception. Symptoms are treated by medical professionals and, ideally, cease with psychopathology going into remission.

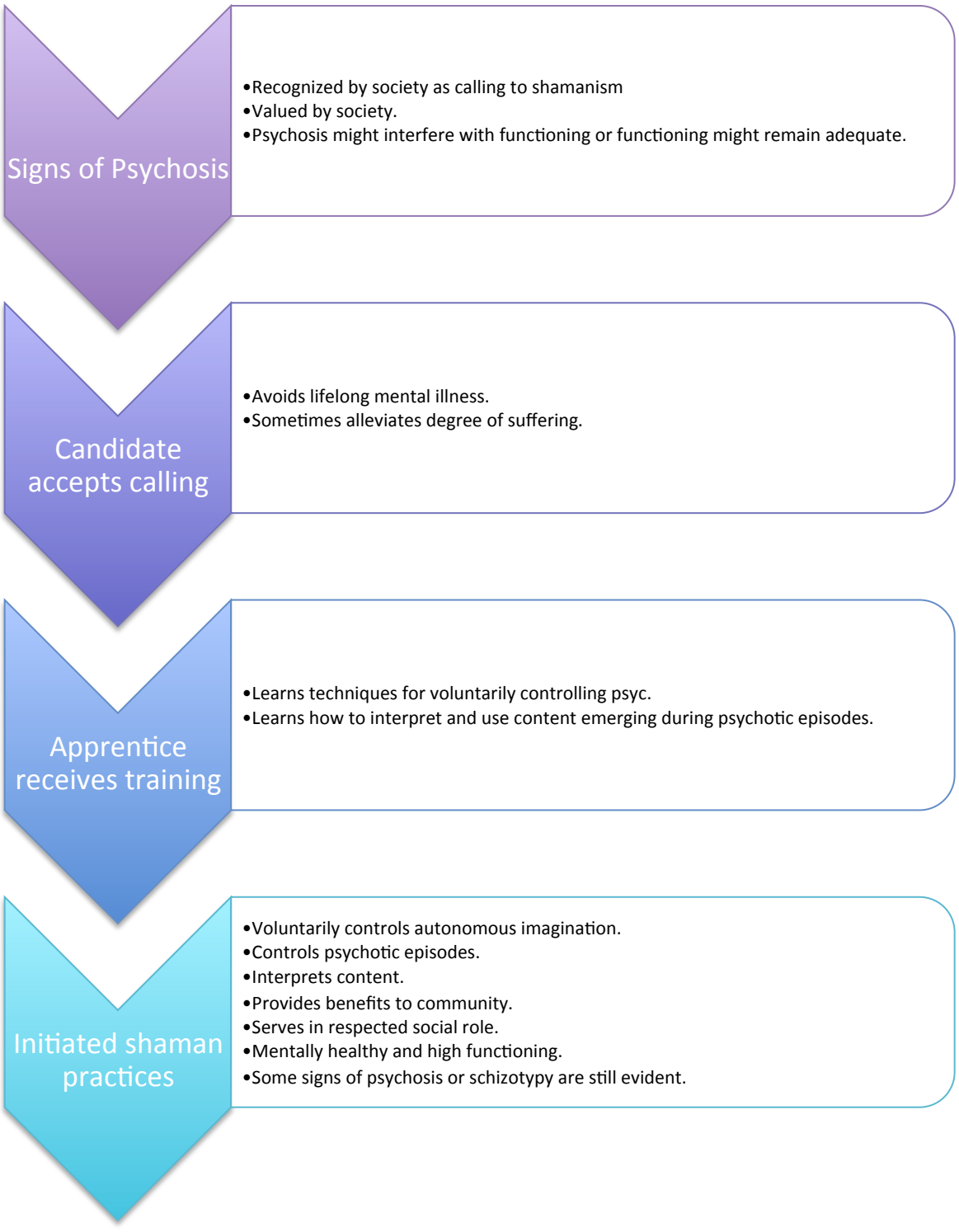


Figure 20. Process by which Balinese shamanic candidates with psychotic symptoms transformed into mentally healthy shamans.

There is much we do not currently know and many opportunities for future researchers. Do shamans tend to have first-degree relatives with mental illness? Is shamanic illness qualitatively or quantitatively different from the West's understanding of mental illness? How does training give shamans control over psychopathology while also improving their functioning and enhancing their mental health? What specifically do shamans learn to do that controls symptoms of mental illness? What are these techniques? Could artists who are not from shamanic cultures learn these techniques? Would these techniques then lessen the degree or kinds of mental illness that tends to afflict a minority of contemporary artists?

Creativity, Madness, and Mental Health

While some individuals appear to have transformed from mentally ill shamanic candidates illness into mental healthy shamans, the tale told about artists, creators, genius, and mental illness has a very different plot.

Divine madness. In many regards, the Western story of artists and madness begins with Plato. In his book, *The Phaedrus,* Plato (360 B.C.E./2008), presented a philosophical conversation between Phaedrus and Socrates. When I read *The Phaedrus,* I soon discovered that Plato's writing, and the ideas Plato attributed to Socrates, were not always paraphrased accurately or interpreted correctly in studies linking creativity, artists, and insanity (e.g., Andreasen, 1987; Lombroso, 1891; Whitley, 2009).

Schlesinger explained (2009) the source of the misunderstanding:

> The creativity-madness link began two millennia ago with the notion of divine inspiration, when ideas were literally 'breathed' into a fortunate few. Plato called this moment 'divine madness,' explaining that 'all the good poets are not in their right mind when they make their beautiful songs'; for him and his peers, creative madness meant being seized and manipulated by the gods. (p. 62)

In *The Phaedrus,* (Plato, 360 B.C.E./2008)*,* Socrates differentiated between two kinds of madness, "one produced by human infirmity" and "the other was a divine release of the soul from the yoke of custom and convention" (p. 54). Socrates categorized divine madness as follows:

> The divine madness was subdivided into four kinds, prophetic, initiatory, poetic, erotic, having four gods presiding over them; the first was the inspiration of Apollo, the second that of Dionysus, the third that of the Muses, the fourth that of Aphrodite and Eros. (p. 54)

Socrates also commented that Apollonian prophetic madness "is a divine gift, and the source of the chiefest blessings granted to men" (Plato, 360 B.C.E./2008, p. 24) while madness resulting from possession by the Muses take "hold of a delicate and virgin soul" (Plato, p. 25). Then, within the poet's psyche, an "inspiring frenzy" occurs (Plato, p. 25).

Socrates explained the fourth kind of inspired madness, the erotic inspiration of Aphrodite and Eros, as an ecstasy:

> Imputed to him who, when he sees the beauty of earth, is transported with the recollection of the true beauty; he would like to fly away, but he cannot; he is like a bird fluttering and looking upward and careless of the world below; and he is therefore thought to be mad. And I have shown this of all inspirations to be the noblest and highest… and that he who loves the beautiful is called a lover because he partakes of it. (Plato, 360 B.C.E./2008, p. 31)

Socrates also noted the common etymological root of prophecy and madness, basically the same Greek word[12] except for one letter, "a modern and tasteless insertion" (Plato, 360 B.C.E./2008, p. 24). Importantly, Socrates stated that divine madness was not disgraceful nor a source of dishonor.

Schlesinger (2009) commented:

> The irony is that the original Greek use of madness was quite different from ours: For them it meant inspiration and illumination, and was a desirable rather than

[12] Similarly, the Latin language does not distinguish linguistically between madness and inspiration (Eysenck, 1995).

> dreaded, state. Moreover, madness was not only externally imposed but temporary, a welcome visitation that enabled creation, rather than an ongoing fragility of the creative themselves. (p. 63)

Ideas and inspiration were not seen as coming from a poet; instead, poets were possessed by gods and served as communication channels for divine messages.

Yet, this understanding of Plato and divine inspiration is rarely found in studies on artists or creativity. The classical scholar Ruth Padel (1995) recognized the appeal of an ancient Greek reference linking artists, creativity, and madness: "It has been important to hear this thought expressed in an ancient language; as if it expressed something so horribly true that we want it to be ancient. Ancient, Greek, and tragic: the adjectives give it a pedigree" (p. 5). Soon "divorced from the supernatural" (Albert & Runco, 2004, p. 22), the offspring of this misbegotten pedigree were then adopted by a series of researchers.

Genius. The concept of genius changed from the classical and medieval concept of genius as a guardian spirit or indwelling divine spirit; first, during the Enlightenment, to an untutored power for accomplishing great deeds; then narrowing and becoming more elite, representing higher degrees of originality and accomplishment. Genius became limited to "High C" creators who uniquely reorganize knowledge and make "substantial new contributions," or especially those "rare human beings [that] produce creative contributions...so significant that they utterly transform a domain of knowledge. These are considered works of genius" (Morelock & Feldman, 1999, p. 449).

Galton (1870), Lombroso (1891), and Ellis (1894) transformed ideas about genius and contributed to the Western trajectory of thought linking genius, artists, and creativity to mental illness. Because of the enduring influence of these three studies, I decided to read the original works in their entirety. In addition, due to the number of later studies

that cite Galton, Lombroso, and Ellis as demonstrating the association between mental illness and genius, creativity, and artists, I felt it was important to describe these studies in detail.

Galton (1870) presented arguments demonstrating that intelligence, artistic talent, athleticism, godliness, and political abilities were inherited because vocations, eminence, and accomplishment tended to cluster in families. In what would now be clearly and quickly identified as racism, Galton also assessed the degree of genius in different races. Not surprisingly, Caucasians ranked highest which supported Galton's argument in favor of eugenics (i.e., selective breeding to improve the human race).

Another study contributing to the creativity and mental illness link is Lombroso's (1891) work on genius. Lombroso mistakenly relied on Plato (see 360 B.C.E./2008), using the philosopher's comments on poetry and divine madness as an early support for his argument that "giants of thought expiate their intellectual force in degeneration and psychoses. It is thus that the signs of degeneration are found more frequently in men of genius than even in the insane" (p. vi). By degeneration, Lombroso meant physical disorders evident in conditions such as stammering, epileptic seizures, left-handedness, syphilis, rickets, meningitis, and tuberculosis.

Using the now discounted method of phrenology, Lombroso (1891) analyzed facial symmetry and skulls for anomalies that distinguish geniuses. He found that physical anomalies distinguishing genius included small stature, pale complexions, emaciated bodies, lameness, hunchbacks, cretinism, and heads that were disproportionately too big or too small.

Signs of insanity, for Lombroso (1891), included "excessive originality" (p. 5), a "tendency to put mystical interpretations on the simplest facts," "the abuse of symbolism" (p. 6), a highly sensitive sense of smell, forgetfulness, composing poems in a dreamlike state or receiving inspiration from dreams, "preference for one particular color" (p. 359), inserting drawings when writing sentences, or losing the sense of time. Writing a scientific formula or the chapter of a book on objects at hand, instead of paper, also indicated insanity and a lifelong focus on a single scientific problem was deemed mania.

Havelock Ellis's (1904) publication, *A Study of British Genius,* attempted a systematic historical analysis using a single biographical source with 30,000 entries. Ellis identified 1,030 "individuals of a very high order of intellectual ability" (p. 7).

The subjects of the study were not limited to fine artists. Ellis included statesmen, scientists, lawyers, judges, philanthropists, wrestlers, religious functionaries, soldiers, and sailors. While the genius of poets such as William Wordsworth or William Blake is broadly accepted today, Ellis (1904) cast a wide net and included individuals such as:

> The first Earl of Sandwich…[who] was the gallant High Admiral of England in the time of Charles II…. He also translated a Spanish work on Metallurgy. I do not know that the book is of any value, but the fact is worthy of notice as showing that he was more than a mere soldier or sailor. (p. 80)

Another genius considered by Ellis was a countess "of congenial tastes and qualities" (p. 188), to whom her brother dedicated a poem and about whom the poet Ben Johnson wrote an epitaph. Most likely, neither the earl nor the countess would be considered as geniuses today. Instead, their work would be categorized as kinds of everyday creativity.

Although the study by Ellis (1904) cannot be wholly generalized to artists working today, as his category "genius" included many nonartistic vocations, Ellis did consider the association between genius and mental illness. He compared two trajectories of thought: writers like Galton (1870) "who seem to assume that genius is a strictly normal variation" with those "who assume that genius is fundamentally a pathological condition and closely allied to insanity" (p. 226). The latter category included Lombroso.

In a nuanced conclusion, Ellis (1904) wrote:

> It can scarcely be said that the course of our investigation, uncertain as it may sometimes appear, has led to either of these conclusions. On the one hand, we have found along various lines the marked prevalence of conditions which can hardly be said to be consonant with a normal degree of health or the normal conditions of vitality; on the other hand, *it cannot be said that we have seen any ground to infer that there is any general connection between genius and insanity, or that genius tends to proceed from families in which insanity is prevalent; it is very rare to find that periods of intellectual ability are combined with periods of insanity, and it is, moreover, notable that (putting aside senile forms of insanity) the intellectual achievements of those eminent men in whom unquestionable insanity has occurred have rarely been of a very high order* [emphasis added]. We cannot, therefore, regard genius either as a purely healthy variation occurring within normal limits, nor yet as a radically pathological condition, not even as an alternation – a sort of allotropic form – of insanity. (pp. 226-227)

But then, seeming to contradict himself, Ellis (1904) stated, "It must not, however, be hastily concluded that the prevalence of insanity among men of genius is an accidental fact, meaningless or unaccountable. In reality it is a very significant fact" (p. 229). However, to put this statement in perspective, Ellis also found stronger associations between genius, clumsiness, "muscular incoordination" (p. 228), and "imbecility" (p. 229) – than the association between genius and insanity. Even so, Ellis is generally credited for demonstrating a strong association between genius and insanity.

Genius: Discussion. To contemporary eyes, Lombroso's (1891) publication makes for rather amusing reading. Many of the traits interpreted by Lombroso as signs of

insanity – originality, mysticism, symbolic thinking, sensitivity, and influential dreams – are now viewed as important, valuable qualities in the creative process (see Feldman, 1988; Holt, 2007; Holt, Delanoy, & Roe, 2004; Krippner, 1962-1963; Maslow, 1971; Mayo, 2009; Neumann, 2010; Thayer-Bacon, 2003).

Despite Lombroso's exceedingly broad definition of insanity, his conflation of genius and physical "degeneration," his dubious methods, and his narrow definition of sanity as hyperconventionality, his work was often mentioned in literature reviews on the psychopathology of artists or highly creative individuals.

In a critique of Andreasen (1987) and Jamison (1993), Schlesinger (2009) critiqued their use of Lombroso:

> Andreasen (1987) only reveals that Lombroso 'argued for the hereditary nature of creativity and madness' (p. 1289), and Jamison (1993) says he provided 'suggestive clues to the significantly increased rates of mood disorders and suicide in eminent writers and artists' (pp. 125–126). Neither reveals the full extent of the nonsense Lombroso actually wrote, but his view of genius as a kind of handicap continues to lend longevity to the idea. (p. 63)

There are a number of additional studies (see Akinola & Mendes, 2008; Carson, 2011; Glazer, 2009; Karlsson, 1970; Leonard, 1989; Ludwig, 1997; Miller & Tal, 2007; Pérez-Fabello & Campos, 2011; Preti & Vellante, 2007; Richards, 1997; Rothenberg, 1990; Sass, 2000-2001; Silvia & Kaufman, 2010; Soeiro-de-Souza et al., 2011; Stanford University Medical Center, 2002) that contributed to theories regarding genius, creativity, artists, and mental illness. Richards (2000-2001) provided a thorough overview of studies on the relationships between psychopathology and creativity.

Enhanced functioning. Degree and type of function is one means by which mental health can be assessed. Assessment of function considers socially established values, such as "occupational success, academic performance, social/interpersonal

interaction, aspects of self-care, etc." (Richards, 2007c). In the imagination of *Das Man,* romantics, and some researchers*,* creativity is often paired with insanity and reduced functioning. But, this prejudice does not fully represent all kinds of creativity, especially creativity that is associated with mental health and creators that demonstrate success in daily, career, academic, social, familial, and personal functioning.

Moreover, creative endeavors can decrease conflict, increase resilience, and improve immune system functioning (Richards, 1997). Creativity can also serve as a buffer or provide compensation for negative life events, stressors, and trauma (Richards, 1990). Self-actualization is associated with creativity (Carson & Runco, 1999; Cohen, 1989; Wolin & Wolin, 1993). Highly creative children and adults are more likely to enjoy positive coping skills and mental health. Creativity can also open "the door to psychological wholeness, transformation, and healing and to ongoing personal growth and evolving concern toward a greater whole" (Richards, 2000, p. 113). In these ways, creativity enhances occupational, academic, social, interpersonal, psychological, physiological, and daily functioning.

High functioning and positive aspects of creativity related to mental health are seen more frequently in "everyday creativity" (Richards, 2007c), "a broad innovative capability defined by *originality* and *meaningfulness* – indeed, a fundamental survival capability – which may be found in many forms of human endeavor, but may often go unrecognized" (Richards, 2007a, p. 500).

Symptoms of mental illness, creativity, and enhanced mental health.

Given previous misunderstandings and misapplications of research on creativity and mental illness (e.g., Whitley, 2009), perhaps due to field specific jargon being

misunderstood by scholars in fields other than psychology as well as news reports that favor dramatic statements over more nuanced communications, it is important to note – upfront – that the presence of some bipolar, schizophrenic, or schizotypal symptoms *appear to enhance creativity* and are *associated with enhanced mental health* when:

- There is *a first-degree relative* (parent, sibling, or child) with the risk, not necessarily the "full blown" disease, of either bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders (Kinney et al., 2000-2001; Richards et al., 1988; 1997).
- *Only a few symptoms are present*, from the list of symptoms used to make definitive psychiatric diagnoses. The number of symptoms is insufficient to qualify as psychopathology.
- Symptoms are too mild to qualify as psychopathology.
- Numerous moderating factors, forms of creative environmental press, are present and make positive contributions to the creative person's process or product.

Consider how creativity was found to be higher than average in the children of schizophrenics. Kinney et al. (2000-2001) found two signs of schizotypy, namely magical thinking and anomalous experiences, were associated with high creativity in mentally healthy individuals. Similarly, a study by Nettles (2006) found poets and visual artists reported "unusual experiences," one sign of schizotypy, more than controls but without negative symptoms of schizophrenia such as the loss of pleasure in normal life events (anhedonia) or losing the ability to begin, follow through, or finish tasks (avolition).

Studies on relationships between writers, creativity, and bipolar and schizophrenia spectrum disorders are reviewed next. Compensatory advantages are noted.

Creative writers and mental illness: Studies and critiques. Initially published in 1987 by the *American Journal of Psychiatry* and later as a chapter in *Eminent Creativity, Everyday Creativity, and Health* (Runco & Richards, 1997), Andreasen assessed the presence of mental illness in 30 writers on the faculty of the Iowa Writer's Workshop. Andreasen began her research report with a brief literature review of earlier studies that found "genius was a 'hereditary taint' transmitted in families along with mental illness" (p. 7). These studies included Galton (1870), Lombroso (1891), and Ellis (1904).

With regards to the topic of genius and insanity, Andreasen (1997) recognized that "quantitative studies have been sparse, and none of the published studies (apart from my own early work) has used modern diagnostic techniques developed to improve the reliability of psychiatric assessment, such as structured interviews and diagnostic criteria" (p. 8). Andreasen's study attempted to remedy some of these previous weaknesses.

Her research participants were limited to one artistic medium. She designed and administered a structured interview. Control subjects were matched by "age, sex, and educational status to an occupationally varied sample...." (p. 8). Previously established diagnostic methods, designed partly by Andreasen, assessed the writers and their first-degree relatives.

Her study found:

> A strong association between creativity and affective illness.... Schizophrenia was conspicuous by its absence, while the rate of affective disorder (i.e., manic-depressive illness) was strikingly high. Eighty percent of the writers had had an episode of affective illness at sometime in their lives, compared with 30% of the control subjects.... 43% of the writers had had some type of bipolar illness, in comparison with 10% of the control subjects.... writers had significantly higher rates of alcoholism (30%, compared with 7% in the control subjects). (pp. 9-10)

After discussing the types of affective disorders found in the writers, Andreasen (1997) then supported her findings by stating that Galton (1870), Lombroso (1891), Ellis

(1904), and others had also "argued that creativity and mental illness run in families and that both tendencies are hereditary" (Andreasen, p. 10). Yet, as noted above, these three studies looked at genius, not creativity, artists, or poets specifically, and Galton (1870) believed that the occurrence of genius was a strictly normal variation. Therefore, results from these broad populations might not be generalizable onto artists. Certainly, the methods used by Galton (1870), Lombroso (1891), and Ellis (1904) did not meet current research standards, racism and sexism biased results, and conclusions were not as clear-cut as presented by Andreasen. After all, Ellis (1904) wrote, "we must put out of court any theory as to genius being a form of insanity" (p. 191).

Andreasen's (1997) study was widely popularized and influential. Nonetheless, the study received critical reviews, which are important to note for the purpose of providing alternate perspectives and decreasing bias. One extended critique was made by Judith Schlesinger, a psychologist, jazz critic, musician, author of the self-published book, *The Insanity Hoax: Exposing the Myth of the Mad Genius* (Schlesinger, 2011) and four articles (Schlesinger, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2009) on the same topic in peer-reviewed journals. Schlesinger's (2009) article, published in *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts,* included this observation:

> The Iowa Writers' Workshop has long been a famous retreat where eminent writers go to recover from setbacks and burnout…. This could easily affect both the frequency and intensity of mood disorders reported by her [Andreasen's] participants, which are already susceptible to a writer's occupational tendency to dramatize. (p. 64)

In other words, the study's convenience population *might* have a higher incidence of psychopathology than a more widely sampled population of successful, productive writers.

While Schlesinger's comment about writers overly dramatizing their experiences might be another prejudicial statement about artists (one could just as easily say that neurotypical and hypernormal individuals tend to be emotionally flat and incapable of telling a story in a meaningful way), she brought attention to Andreasen's small sample size and questioned the appropriateness of the broad generalizations made by Andreasen.

Schlesinger (2009) also pointed out:

> Andreasen.... had to lump together the people who recalled episodes of severe depression and mania with those who reported only a vague hypomanic experience 'at some time in their lives'…. This is hardly the same thing as 'proving' that more than three quarters of writers are seriously disturbed, which is how her results are commonly construed. (p. 64)

In addition, Andreasen (1997) not only conducted all interviews, she also made all assessments of psychopathology, including diagnosing family members without having met them, which increased the chance of experimenter bias. Of course, no study is perfect and Andreasen acknowledged some of the limitations inherent in her work; however, these limitations did not factor into more nuanced or provisional conclusions.

Andreasen's 1997 study demonstrated its usefulness not only in discovering important data regarding creative writers, but also as a step on the ladder of research that led to carefully-crafted future studies with blind assessments, larger sample sizes, and other research methods that increased the validity of results. Even theories that are eventually disconfirmed contribute to research trajectories. Despite the critiques of Andreasen's work, many of her results were, to a great extent, confirmed by later studies that added nuance to our understanding of the associations between creativity, artists, mental illness, and mental health.

In a metaphoric fashion, Andreasen (1987) handed off the torch of creative madness to Kay Jamison. Informed by her own struggles with bipolar disorder (2007),

Jamison wrote *Touched with Fire: Manic-Depressive Illness and the Artistic Temperament* (Jamison, 1995). In this book, Jamison's stated purpose was to:

> Make a literary, biographical, and scientific argument for a compelling association, not to say actual overlap, between two temperaments – the artistic and the manic-depressive – and their relationship to the rhythms and cycles, or temperament, of the natural world. The emphasis will be on understanding the relationship between moods and imagination, the nature of moods – their variety, their contrary and oppositional qualities...and the importance of moods in igniting thought, changing perceptions, creating chaos, forcing order upon that chaos, and enabling transformation. (p. 5)

Although Jamison's (1993) literature review included Plato (360 B.C.E./2008) and the concept divine madness, she seemed to ignore several types of divine madness (i.e., the prophetic inspiration of Apollo, the poetic madness caused by the Muses, and the erotic source of madness attributed to Aphrodite and her son Eros).

Instead, Jamison favored initiatory Dionysian madness. Perhaps for Jamison, Dionysian divine madness appeared most similar to the suffering caused by manic depression. Although Jamison did not develop the topic of initiation, she vividly described Dionysian suffering, "frenzied ecstasies," "savage brutality," "blood feasts" (p. 50), "psychosis," and altered states of consciousness (p. 51) resulting from bipolar disorders.

Like many researchers, Jamison missed the importance of spirituality, holiness, beauty, divinity, attraction to an ideal, and belief in a supernatural world within the inspired creative processes described by Plato (360 B.C.E./2008). Jamison did not develop this trajectory of thought despite many clues in her book indicating she was aware of the importance of spirituality in the creative processes of some poets.

Interspersed with descriptions of diagnostic categories and data from studies, most of which support her argument, Jamison (1993) integrated passionate, powerful,

poetic, even tragic quotes from artists to dramatically illustrate the extreme moods and suffering caused by manic depression. Reminiscent of Barron's comment that "the creative person is… occasionally crazier and yet adamantly saner, than the average person" (in Richards, 2010, p. 195), Jamison wrote:

> There is a great deal of evidence to suggest that compared to 'normal' individuals, artists, writers, and creative people in general, are both psychologically 'sicker' – that is, they score higher on a wide variety of measures of psychopathology – and psychologically healthier (for example, they show quite elevated scores on measures of self-confidence and ego strength). (p. 97)

While Jamison (1993) offered 14 references for the preceding statement, she did not develop the topic of psychological health or ego strength in creators. The seeming paradox, with artists testing as both sicker and healthier, is not explored. Instead, the paragraph veers suddenly to "inherited vulnerability" (p. 97), heightened passions, and partial derangement of the senses. Jamison eventually circles around to commenting on "Poets, while beholden to the spur, have also been mindful of a 'need for the curb" (p. 98). Then, Jamison quoted the poet Coleridge:

> Poetry, even that of the loftiest, and seemingly that of the wildest odes, [has] a logic of its own as severe as that of science; and more difficult.... In the truly great poets.... There is a reason assignable, not only for every word, but for the position of every word. (p. 98)

But, the practice of such logic or the strength required to bring order to chaos – while mentioned in passing – is not Jamison's (1993) focus. Her interests, dramatically and poetically expressed, are in Melville's "intolerable suffering" (p. 240), the "poisonous reptile" (p. 191), the "apostle of affliction" (p. 190), and the "mind's canker in its savage mood" (p. 149).

Schlesinger's (2009) critique noted "mutual drawbacks" in the studies by Andreasen (1987) and Jamison (1993), such as "the use of hand-picked, rarefied samples

of people known to the investigator; idiosyncratic diagnostic criteria; heavy reliance on self-report; and lack of significant results" (p. 65). Andreasen and Jamison selected the artists, assessed mental health, and made "inferences about how the symptoms relate to the accomplishments," which can confound "the judge and participant" (Silvia & Kaufman, 2010, p. 382). Yet, it is the confluence of researcher and writer in Jamison that allowed her to portray manic depression with vivid metaphors and a keen depth of understanding.

Like Lombroso (1891), Jamison confounded symptoms and complications of physical disease with mental illness. Although Jamison diagnosed composer Robert Schumann as bipolar, many researchers believed that complications from syphilis caused Schumann's suicide attempt and resulted in his eventual institutionalization (Hayden, 2003; Ostwald, 1985; Reich, 1985/2001). Schumann's biographer, John Worthen (2007) wrote:

> A psychoanalytic version of his mental instability, constructed from a record of occasional panic attacks, some real anxiety, some periods of melancholy, and – it must be admitted – some biographical sleight of hand, has found itself accepted as the grand narrative of his life. It has been elevated into the popular belief that Schumann was mentally unstable all his life, with bipolar disorder being most likely. Such a belief has, in practice, often been no more firmly grounded than on the observation that he was sometimes cheerful and at other times sad. (pp. 365-366)

Schlesinger also criticized Jamison's blurring of diagnostic categories, and slim, if not misinterpreted, symptomatic evidence of psychopathology in the prolific writer Ralph Waldo Emerson - because of one mood disordered relative (p. 236) and one complaint by Emerson regarding occasional writer's block (pp. 247-248). Such diagnoses, as another notable researcher on creativity and genius, Dean Keith Simonton (see Simonton, 1984, 1988, 1999), observed, "may come from experienced psychiatrists, yet the evaluations

are often based on skimpy information about symptoms…many of these diagnoses would not stand up in a court of law" (Simonton, 1994, p. 288).

Sass (2000-2001), in his exploration of how underlying philosophies influenced artistic styles and views of creativity, recognized how:

> Romanticist notions of creativity and the arts remain influential, not only in contemporary psychoanalysis, psychology, and psychiatry but also, more broadly, in the public mind and in more traditional and mainstream areas of artistic and literary endeavor. Accordingly, the most prevalent views of artistic experience and expression continue to emphasize the central role of developmentally primitive, irrational, and impassioned modes of experience. The creative core of aesthetic creation and perception is widely assumed to involve a regression or shift backward or downward to forms of consciousness having one or more of several key qualities: ready access to emotional, instinctual, and sensorially concrete modes of experience; a heightened sense of fusion between both self and world and signifier and signified; and freedom from the rationality, conventional rules, and intellectual categories of everyday or scientific modes of awareness. (p. 58)

Sass (2000-2001) specifically mentioned Jamison's (1993) book, *Touched with Fire,* as written from a Romantic perspective, focusing on the irrational, primitive, childlike, and regressive aspects of creativity – and prone to exaggeration. Romantic beliefs regarding creativity continue to "influence...the less avant-garde areas of contemporary culture" to an extent that makes "its assumptions seem virtually self-evident, [and] thus invisible" (p. 58). Yet, "Irrationality, spontaneity, the passions, and a sense of union with the ambient world have, in fact, been far less central in most of the conceptions of aesthetic experience that have been dominant both before and after Romanticism" (Sass, p. 58).

Prior to Romanticism, rationalism, rules, ideal proportions, verisimilitude, and harmony were aesthetic values (Sass, 2000-2001) in the arts. After Romanticism waned, as manifested in Baudelaire, "dispassionate deliberation, conscious craft, and an alienated stance" (Sass, p. 59) were valued. Such formalist values, goals, and actions call into

question Jamison's (1993) overly narrow collection of data and her too narrowly focused conclusions. Jamison primarily studied poets from the Romantic era (Sass) and this selection bias may have skewed her results. Different historical and philosophical periods favor different ways of being.

Schuldberg (1990) explained how Romantic era beliefs about creativity gave way to the Modernist association of genius "with social disjunction, isolation, exile, and the 'cooler' mood states inherent in alienation and anxiety" (Sass, 2000-2001). Contrary to Romantic *sturm und drang* (storm and stress), Modernism emphasized "isolation, coolness, and detachment" (Sass, p. 59) to overcome "numbing of perception that occurs with habituation" (Sass, p. 59), and "the adopting of a highly detached, often fragmentingly analytic or microscopic perspective on the world.... a stripping away of all normal affective, practical, or cultural associations of objects" (Sass, p. 59).

Rothenberg (1990) commented that the widespread acceptance of the "presumably objective" studies by Andreasen (1987) and Jamison (1993) indicated "the need to believe in a connection between creativity and madness…so strong that affirmations are welcomed and treated rather uncritically" (p. 150). Rothenberg (1990) performed and analyzed 2,000 hours of interviews. While his results were far less dramatic than either Andreason (1987) or Jamison (1993), and therefore unexciting copy for the popular media, he found:

> First, contrary to popular as well as professional belief, there is no specific personality type associated with outstanding creativity. Creative people are not necessarily childish or erratic in human relationships, as is often thought, nor are they necessarily extraordinarily egotistic or rebellious or eccentric. (p. 8)

The single characteristic identified by Rothenberg, "*across the board,* present in *all* creative people" was "motivation…they want *specifically* to create and to be creative,

not merely to be successful or effective or competent" (pp. 8-9). Although Rothenberg is a practicing psychiatrist and a professor at Harvard University, Jamison (1993) discounted Rothenberg's critique because of his "lack of appreciation for the subtlety, complexity, and fluctuation in the symptom patterns of manic-depressive and depressive illness…." (p. 299).

Jamison (1993) preferred, or could not avoid, taking journeys into the underworld. She took "the dive or journey underground" (p. 116) where she could look at the darkness manifested in literature. Jamison understood how artists have a "capacity to regress, more or less at will, to the games of the underground, without losing contact with the surface, [which] seems to be the essence of the poetic, and of any other form of creativity" (p. 104). Inspired states are explained as regression, primary process, pre-logical, and dissociative thinking.

Fourteen Angels Watch Do Keep, Denita Benyshek, 2012.
Drawing and collage from *The Opera Book: Hansel and Gretel,* with digital art.

Creative writing, spirits, and divine inspiration. While Jamison (1993) does not fully recognize the creative process contributions made by spiritualism and spirituality, there are, nonetheless, signs of poetic divine madness (see Plato, 360 B.C.E./2008) and glimpses of spirits in quotes from literature scattered throughout Jamison's book.

Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770) wrote, "By our own spirits are we deified" (as cited in Jamison, 1993, p. 52). William Cowper (1731-1800) credited "Spirits" with making him an author (Jamison, 1993, p. 122). William Blake reported conversations with spirits and being physically entered by the poet Milton (as cited in Jamison, 1993, p. 93). Although often poetic and undoubtedly Romantic, Jamison takes a skeptical view of paranormal phenomena. Thus, Blake's supposed delusions, plus his "hallucinations," "mystical element," and "supra-or extra-natural power," (p. 94) contributed to psychopathological diagnoses by Jamison (1993)[13].

Like Lombroso (1891), Jamison (1993) diagnosed psychopathology if poets showed an "interest in spiritualism" (p. 168). Jamison diagnosed Walt Whitman as psychopathological due to his "cosmic temperament" (p. 220). Interests in the "vast," the "great and the whole," and "mystical qualities," of visionaries were dismissed by Jamison as hypomania as well as elements of creative thought. But, how these qualities relate to creative thought is not explained. In a chapter title based on a John Donne poem, Jamison threw her net "upon the heavens" (p. 240). But, instead of heavenly beings, stars of light, or the ecstasy of becoming one with the universe, Jamison pulled in lithium and gene therapy.

Jamison's (1993) book included a chart listing 25 common experiences of "Mood, Cognitive, and Behavioral Changes Reported During Intense Creative Episodes" (p. 79).

[13] Norman (1915) also diagnosed Blake as psychopathological based on these symptoms.

Out of the 25 experiences listed, the 20th most common experience was "religious thoughts/feelings" (p. 79) with approximately 20% of the study's population fitting this category. Yet, the spirituality of this subset of writers received little attention from Jamison. The endless night of the underground prevented her from writing fully modeled, in light *and* shade, case studies.

Jamison (1993) described how the poet William Cowper felt hunted "by spiritual hounds in the night season" (p. 20) during his confinement in a mental institution. Jamison also noted "the deadening side" to Cowper's "melancholy" (p. 20). However, Jamison excluded how Cowper also basked in beams of enlivening spiritual light within his book of spiritual hymns.

Cowper (1783) wrote of being inspired by "sanctifying light," a divine presence that is "Majestic like the sun," and "gives a light to every age" (p. 231). As a poet, he served as a channel for the "glory" that filled "the sacred page[s]" of the hymns (p. 231). Cowper concluded with gratitude:

> For such a bright display
> As makes a world of darkness shine
> With beams of heavenly day.... (p. 231)

Cowper also penned the poems "Light Shining out of Darkness" and "The Shining Light." In the latter poem, the first two stanzas are filled with terror, sin, destruction, and vengeance. Then, Cowper (1877) wrote a transitional stanza followed by:

> I see, or think I see,
> A glimmering from afar;
> A beam of day, that shines for me,
> To save me from despair.
> Forerunner of the sun,
> It marks the Pilgrim's way;

> I'll gaze upon it while I run,
> And watch the rising day. (p. 266)

Such light and hope does not shine in the unrelenting darkness in *Touched with Fire* (Jamison, 1993). Jamison does not provide an accurate, balanced description of artists – and, indeed, that is not her purpose. She is not writing about artistic temperament in all aspects, only about manic depression. Sanctifying lights, sacred pages, and heavenly days await attention from future researchers with a different purpose and a different vision.

In *Holy Fire: Nine Visionary Poets and the Quest for Enlightenment,* Halpern (Halpern, 1994) recognized how "the visionary poet can escape the exigencies of his or her particular time and culture by invoking a world beyond the one we inhabit" (p. xvii). Such poets can reach "through the surface to touch the primal material," see "into the life of things," and see "a world beyond their own" (p. xv).

> They must believe they possess a proprietary interest in the imagination because the mandate of their poetry is not only to evoke human experience but to use their imagination to move beyond the confines of this experiential life in order to reenvision the world, perhaps even to create a better world. Which is to say, the visionary imagination is in the service of a higher order. (Halpern, 1994, p. xvii)

While Jamison (1993) wrote of the dark suffering attending bipolar disorders, she missed the sparkling stars in the heavens, those celestial upper realms where an artist may also travel. The scattered breadcrumbs of spirituality can be glimpsed here and there throughout Jamison's book, indicating a faint path that might lead from Plato's (see 360 B.C.E./2008) divine madness into a trajectory of psychological research studying artists and spirituality.

Next, I continue the basic overview of creativity, artists, and mental illness, after which I return to a consideration of spirituality in artistic creative processes.

Creativity and bipolar spectrum disorders. Instead of studying a population of creative writers or poets to determine the association between mental illness and creativity (Richards, Kinney, Lunde, Benet, and Merzel 1988; reprinted in 1997).

The researchers began with 17 individuals previously diagnosed with manic-depression, 16 cyclothymes, and 11 normal first-degree relatives who were compared to 33 controls without personal or familial history of a major affective disorder, cyclothymia, or schizophrenia. Out of the control group, 15 individuals were normal and 18 had different diagnosis of mental illness. Raters were blind to the diagnosis of participants and many measures were taken to reduce researcher bias.

Creativity was assessed using the Lifetime Creativity Scales, which use a broad definition of creativity that is not limited to great eminence, genius, or the arts. "In contrast, in the present study creativity is viewed as a quality or capability that varies broadly in the general population and may be manifested in a wide variety of outcomes involving virtually any field of endeavor" (Richards et al., 1997, p. 126).

The inclusive Richards et al. (1988) definition of creativity included participants such as the owner of a dairy, a volunteer who sang in a church choir, a journalist for a community paper, and an optician who owns a shop. These participants were rated as moderately creative.

The study (Richards et al., 1997) found that:

> Overall peak creativity may be enhanced, on the average, in subjects showing milder and, perhaps, subclinical expressions of potential bipolar liability (i.e., the cyclothymes and normal first-degree relatives) compared either with individuals who carry no bipolar liability (control subjects) or individuals with more severe

> manifestations of bipolar liability (manic-depressives). Elevated mood, a bipolar feature, also facilitated risk taking, self-confidence, and courage – traits that enhance creativity. (p. 133)

In addition, Richards et al. (1997) confirmed results of earlier studies (e.g., Andreasen & Canter, 1974) wherein cyclothymes demonstrated enhanced creativity, generalized this relationship onto the general population, and confirmed studies suggesting eminent creators showed higher prevalence of both bipolar disorder Type I (Juda, 1949) as well as bipolar disorder Type II (Andreasen & Canter, 1974; Jamison, 1990).

Compensatory advantages Recollecting the Richards et al. (1997) study, Richards (2010) later stated "It was *not* the sicker people who were more creative. Better functioning individuals – or people during better functioning mood states – showed the highest creativity" (p. 197).

Creativity, schizophrenia, adoptees, and biological parents. Richards also explored the relationship between creativity and the schizophrenia spectrum as one of the researchers in a study (Kinney et al., 2000-2001) of adult adoptees. Control participants without biological family history of psychiatric hospitalization were matched with participants who had a biological parent diagnosed with schizophrenia. The researchers used established diagnostic criteria and blind assessments of vocational and avocational creativity.

Similar to the Richards et al. (1997) findings regarding bipolar spectrum, creativity, and first-degree relatives, Kinney et al. (2000-2001) found "nonschizophrenics with either schizotypal or schizoid personality disorder or multiple schizotypal signs (which other research has linked with genetic liability for schizophrenia) had significantly higher creativity than other participants" (p. 17). Creativity was highest in

"the psychologically healthier offspring of schizophrenics" (p. 23) confirming another study's (Heston & Denney, 1968) findings that adoptees with a schizophrenic biological parent were more likely to be engaged in creative vocations and avocations. In addition, Kinney et al. (2000-2001) also confirmed Schuldberg's (1990) finding that participants with signs of magical thinking, recurrent illusions, and odd speech, all symptoms of schizotypy were highly creative.

Despite the suffering and disability resulting from severe bipolar disorder or schizophrenia, these mental illnesses persist and are thought to provide compensatory advantages to individuals and society (Andreasen, 1987), with manic-depressive illness enhancing creativity in better functioning individuals (Richards et al., 1988) perhaps partly due to confronting extreme emotions that provide "a richer organization in memory, a richer palette to work with" (Richards, 1996). Goodwin and Jamison (2010) also recognized that many individual and social benefits, some of which involve creativity, could result from milder forms of manic-depression:

> Certain aspects of bipolar illness probably are important and helpful in other fields of accomplishment as well. It is likely that mood changes (elevated and expansive mood, inflated self-esteem, increased enthusiasm, increased emotional intensity, and infectious mood) are equally, if differently, important to those who create and to those in business or positions of leadership. This is probably true as well for increased energy levels and a decreased need for sleep. On a very general level, however, cognitive changes (sharpened and unusually creative thinking, flight of ideas, and hyperacusis) are likely more useful to those in the arts and sciences than to those in positions of political and military leadership. Conversely, interpersonal changes brought about by hypomania (enhanced liveliness, uninhibited people seeking, interpersonal charm, the ability to find vulnerable spots in others and to make use of them, increased perceptiveness at the subconscious or unconscious level, and increased social ease) are probably more likely to benefit those in leadership positions than those in the arts and sciences. (p. 23)

In her literature review of studies exploring creativity and mental illness, Richards (2000-2001) mentioned a number of studies "showing higher creativity among healthier

relatives of schizophrenics…. Where symptoms are concerned, there is a key intermediate range, and more is not necessarily better" (p. 112). In addition, only some symptoms convey a compensatory advantage. Negative symptoms of thought disorder and flat affect, considered part of the schizophrenia spectrum, are not associated with creativity.

To explain the genetic and even evolutionary compensatory advantages that accompany bipolar and schizophrenia spectrums, Richards (2000-2001) used sickle cell anemia as an example. While the "full-blown syndrome" of the disease "can be devastating, yet the carrier state an be rather mild, with the additional compensatory advantage: resistance to malaria" (p. 112). Thus, full-blown psychopathology can be devastating, yet, in "moderation" (p. 112) or when manifested in a relative, bipolar and schizophrenia enhance creativity.

Spectrums of mental health, creativity, and mental illness: Summary.

But, even in eminent creators, mental illness is the exception (Leftwich, 2008). Most highly creative individuals do not qualify for the clinical, psychopathological range of mental, emotional, or social disorders. Moreover, there are aspects of what is currently considered psychopathology that enhance creativity, including hypomania, "soft" bipolar traits, obsessive work, rapid thinking, impulsiveness, restlessness, risk-taking, propensity for intense experiences, and episodes of heightened anxiety. Unfortunately, the use of psychopathological diagnostic terms to group and classify these behaviors adds fuel to common misperceptions regarding artists and insanity. The relationships between creativity and psychopathology are not simple.

There are, as mentioned earlier, multiple moderating factors and epigenetic phenomena. Plus, all creativity is not alike. “It an make a huge difference whether a relation involves everyday or eminent creativity… or is focused more on work or leisure” (Richards, 2000-2001, p. 113). Even within the arts, the types, degrees, and roles of psychopathology vary between practitioners in different media; for example, between architects and poets or even between essayists, novelists, and poets (Ludwig, 1997).

One study (Andreasen, 1987) of creative writers found a large percentage had manic depression at some time in their lives, but symptoms of schizophrenia were absent. A second study (Jamison, 1995) of writers also found a higher degree than normal presence of psychopathology. Nonetheless, this population of writers also scored higher on self-confidence and ego strength, which are signs of mental health.

Reported paranormal and mystical experiences of artists were interpreted as symptoms of psychopathology and the spirituality of poets was ignored or discounted. Another study (Richards et al., 1988) of a clinical population diagnosed with bipolar spectrum disorders as well as a control population found peak creativity was associated with mild or subclinical signs of bipolar liability, better functioning individuals, and bipolar disease in first-degree relatives. Peak creativity was also found in the mentally healthy adult children of schizophrenic parents (Kinney et al., 2000-2001).

Both bipolar and schizophrenia are believed to provide compensatory advantages that enhance creativity. Often, the differences between mentally ill and mentally healthy traits are subtle, more likely to appear along a continuum than be a system that can be neatly separated into mental health or mental illness (Richards, 1990).

Conformity, medical models, and antipsychiatry. In descriptions of geniuses, artists, creators, or shamans as psychopathological, the concept of normality is tacitly present. The definition of *normal* is constructed in polarized contrast to how *abnormal* is defined. Normal behavior is identified based on context and continually shifts due to changes in social values.

Synonyms for the word abnormal include the following: deviant, unusual, distressing, dysfunctional, and maladaptive (among others). These synonyms can help describe key features or dimensions that psychologists and other professionals may use to help identify abnormality. Each dimension represents a unique perspective and offers specific advantages when trying to describe and define normal vs. abnormal. However, each perspective also has specific limitations, and attempting to use any one of them in isolation as the sole determinant of what is abnormal leaves you with an incomplete and oversimplified view of abnormal behavior. (Leftwich, 2008)

Lombroso's assessment of madness used a conformity model of mental health.

> The [etic] conformity model evolved out of the general scientific tradition, which assumes a normal distribution of characteristics and behaviors within a population. The interpretation of individual behavior is referenced to a norm group: If the behavior occurs in high frequency, then it is considered good, whereas if the behavior occurs infrequently, it is likely to be judged as bad. (Jackson, 2006, p. 310)

The conformity model can be applied from either an etic or emic point of view. In the etic model, there is:

> A culturally universal view of mental health that defines behavior on a fixed adjust-maladjusted continuum. That is, there is a model of behavior that crosses cultural and racial lines, and the criteria for interpreting behavior remains constant regardless of the cultural context of the person being judged. (Jackson, 2006, p. 310)

However, from a culturally sensitive point of view, "deviance need not be judged by one set of rules – that is, people may be judged according to the rules of the group to which they belong," with deviance "defined as divergent attitudes and behaviors that arise out of a specific culture, allowing overt behaviors to mean different things to different people. The only valid interpretation depends on individual indigenous cultural norms" (Jackson, 2006, p. 310).

In Boekhoven's (2011) overview of shifting perceptions of shamanism after World War II, he explained that "The humanistic optimism regarding shamans was also cultivated by the radical movement that became known as 'anti-psychiatry'" (p. 180). Established by psychoanalyst David Cooper (1967), antipsychiatry questioned the medical model that applied the label "psychotic breakdown" to what was a successful "breakthrough" and potentially "a creative period of spiritual development" (p. 93).

For Cooper, the difference between a breakdown and a breakthrough "resides mainly in the supervening process of social invalidation" (p. 94) and if the breakthrough was successfully managed and structured, then the tribe could experience *therapeusis,* a "renewal of each person through death and rebirth achieved by these miraculous means" (p. 94).

With regards to conformity, Stein (2005) recognized how cultural embeddedness can result in bias:

> Hyper-conventional… thinking… results in an undesirably low level of self-creativity…. There is often a thin line between originality and pathological neologism. What seems indicative of deep disturbance and lack of communicative ability in one context or society might be viewed as original in a different context or society. (p. 134)

Another way to understand the various theorists is via developmental stages. Lombroso appears to be working from concrete operational thought wherein "morality is conventionally defined" and there are pressures to conform (Kenny, 2008, p. 592)

Das Man is Martin Heidegger's impersonal term for multiple, indiscriminate, neutral, inauthentic, and indeterminate persons, the singular body of "they" populating society (Inwood, 1999) and the normal population against which deviancy is judged. The ambiguous and faceless *they,* the *Das Man,* determines "what we do and how we do it," wrote Heidegger (1953/1966, p. 126). He continued:

> In this inconspicuousness and unascertainability, the they unfolds its true dictatorship. We enjoy ourselves and have fun the way they enjoy themselves. We read, see, and judge literature and art the way they see and judge....The they, which is nothing definite and which all are, though not as a sum, prescribes the kind of being of everydayness.... being-with-one-another as such creates averageness. It is an existential character of the they. In its being, they is essentially concerned with averageness. Thus, the they maintains itself factically in the averageness of what is proper, what is allowed, and what is not...it does not get to 'the heart of the matter,' because it is insensitive to every difference of level and genuineness. Publicness obscures everything, and then claims that what has been thus covered over is what is familiar and accessible to everybody. (p. 127)

The norms guiding behavior also restrict ways in which people can obtain information and limits what kind of information is accessed. Despite the Western emphasis on individualism, individuals are still expected to conform to norms established by society, creating a situation that *requires* sensitive, genuine, creative deviants who are able to get to the heart of the matter, willing to at least temporarily forego the light pleasures of enjoyment, see what is unfamiliar, and risk improprieties – to provide the hypernormal and hypo-insane (inadequately insane) *Das Man* with the benefits of these experiences and, perhaps, a vicarious means of experiencing deviancy.

Within her investigations of creativity, Richards began looking at how creative individuals are stigmatized. Often, creators are stereotyped as "strange and weird, flakey

and downright peculiar…. Absent minded professors stumbling into walls, wild haired scientists…. innovators sitting all night at desks, pizza boxes piled up, artists covered with paint….” (Richards et al., 2011, p. 471). This stereotype may serve a social function, allowing neurotypical individuals to safely experience their normality in comparison with abnormal others. Then, with pixie-like humor, Richards commented on how insanity is projected onto artists:

> But do we (big question) sometimes pathologize the creator while fleeing from our own unconscious minds, our irrationality, our Jungian Shadow? Better to say they [creators] are weird[er] than we are (and that maybe this is what a healthy norm should look like – whereas the statistical norm for human behavior may look more like the walking dead)? (pp. 471-472)

In the medical model, mental health is defined as the absence of symptoms and the goal is diagnosis and disease cure. “Psychological problems are viewed just like physical disease,” as indicated by language such as “suffering from depression, afflicted by phobias” (Jackson, 2006, p. 309).

Jackson (2006) recognized how “the medical model tends to over-pathologize the client” while overlooking “external explanations of behavior” including “social pathologies such as racism, discrimination, poverty, poor education, and lack of health care. This practice is similar to singling out a child who is acting out in a family that is dysfunctional” (p. 309).

Denita Benyshek, *A Tree in Winter Remembers Spring.* Engraved glass.
King County, WA Ethnic Heritage Collection, Harborview Medical Center, Seattle, WA.

Creativity, madness, and mental health: Discussion and summary. To facilitate the comparison of contemporary artists to shamans and simplify the presentation of data, I offer a series of graphic organizers with accompanying discussions as shown in the overview in Figure 21.

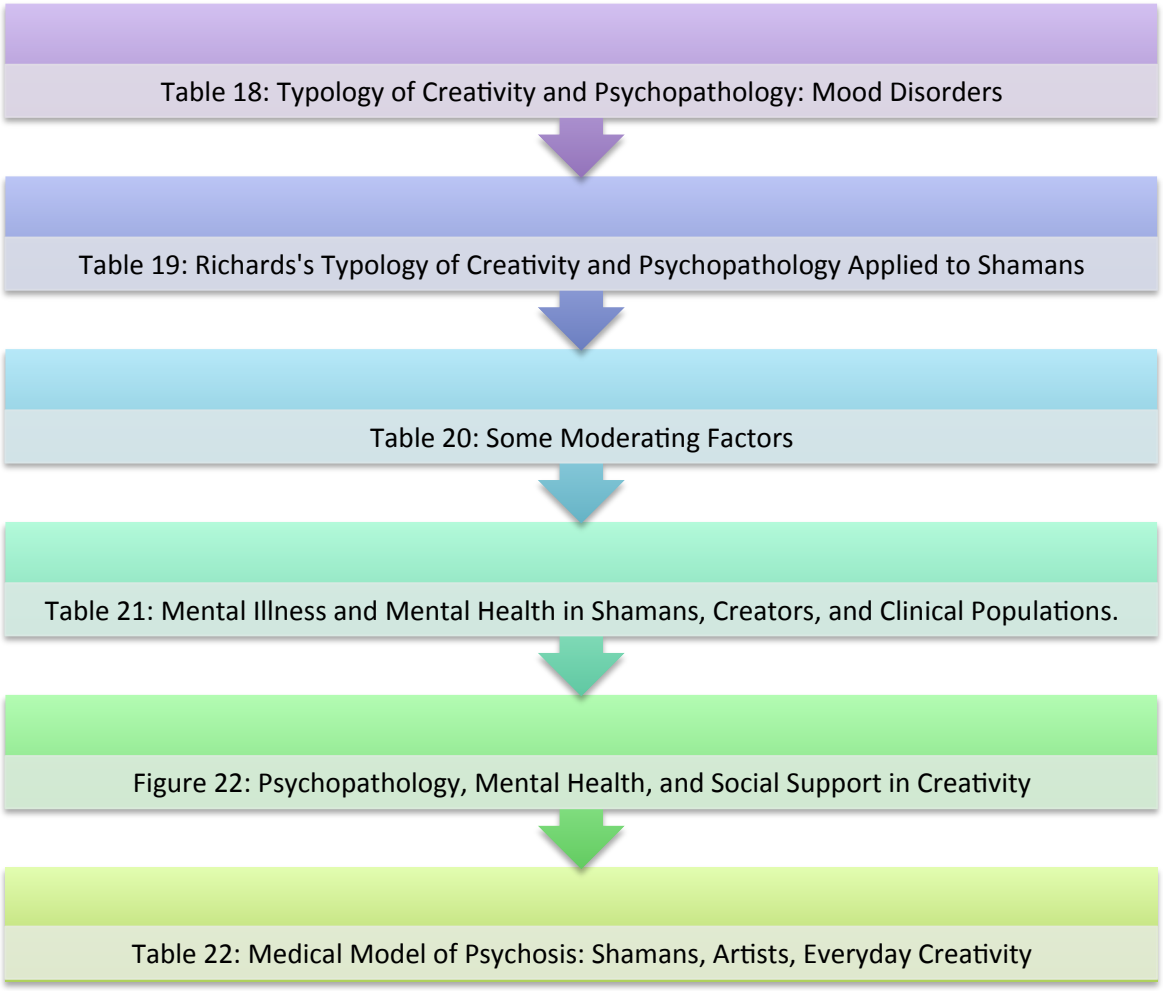


Figure 21. Overview of 6 graphic organizers considering the intertwined paths of mental illness, mental health, and creativity related to shamans, artists, and creators.

In a thorough review of research on bipolar and schizophrenia spectrums and creativity, Richards (2000-2001) presented a table of typologies showing five

relationships, and degrees of influence between bipolar disorders and creativity, reprinted here with permission as Table 18.

Psychopathology can: drive the need for creative expression; contribute to content; discover anxiety provoking material which may either lead to decompensation, escape, or improved mental health; potentially attract criticism; suggest certain vocations; and/or contribute to creative abilities through relatives with bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders.

Borrowing the comparison and organizational structure created by Richards (2000-2001), the role of psychopathology in a shaman's creative process is discussed next. Table 19 presents this typology and shows the various dynamics, moderating factors, and results.

Table 18

Richard's Typology of Creativity and Psychopathology: Mood Disorders

Typology	Application
Direct Relation of Pathology to Creativity (P > C)	Psychopathology can contribute to content and process of creativity….
Indirect Relation of Pathology to Creativity (P > T > C)	Pathology may lead to creative expression…. pathology may also drive occupation drift, bringing persons into career situations where their creativity can blossom.
Direct Relation of Creativity to Pathology (C > P)	Artistic creativity, in particular, may elicit unsuspected material, anxiety, and decompensation…. However, note, too, that under the right conditions, such short-term distress can ultimately lead to health, as in an indirect relation of pathology to creativity, shown in row 2.
Indirect Relation of Creativity to Pathology (C > T > P)	Consider conflicts that are not worked through, as in row 2, but lead to internal or external difficulties and to subsequent escape….Then there is external disapproval of the creative child or adult who is perhaps ostracized or ridiculed, lacks support, decompensates, and copies badly or escapes.
Third Factor Affecting Both Creativity and Pathology (C < T > P)	One compelling example involves familial liability or risk for bipolar disorders (or schizophrenia), here listed as a third factor. This could independently raise the odds of overt pathology, creative accomplishment, or both, as in the normal first-degree relatives of bipolar persons who show a creative advantage.

Note: P and C signify pathology or creativity, respectively, or some aspect thereof. T signifies a separate third factor that may mediate between or separately contribute to pathology and creativity. Effects can also be multiple and overlapping.

(Richards, 2000-2001, p. 117)

Table 19

Richards's Typology of Creativity and Psychopathology Applied to Shamans

Typology	Application
Direct Relation of Pathology to Shamanic Creativity (P > SHC)	Psychopathology can contribute to the content and process of shamanic creativity through visions/hallucinations, magical thinking, hypersensitivity, purported psi abilities, paranormal experiences. Pathology may also inspire creative expression, creating a need to process an event, experience, emotion, etc.
Indirect Relation of Pathology to Shamanic Creativity resulting in Mental Health. (P > T > SHC > SH MH)	Pathology may also drive occupational drift. Some symptoms are recognized as signs of future shamans with 3rd factor "T" seen in social support, including identification of candidate, training apprentice, initiation, and socially valued role as practicing shaman. Not only does a shamanic practice allow creativity to bloom, a practicing shaman is generally mentally healthy or has superior mental health.
Indirect Relation of Client Pathology to Shamanic Creativity. (CL P > SHC > SH MH)	For a shaman, pathology in others (individuals, families, societies, disturbed relationships with earth, etc.) may inspire a shaman's creativity towards a goal of restoring balance and mental health.
Direct Relation of Shamanic Creativity to Pathology that is transformed into Mental Health. (SHC > CL P > CL MH)	Shamanic creativity, including dancing, drumming, and purported visions, spirit communication, or journeys, etc., may elicit unsuspected material. However, such discovery may be the purpose of shamanic practices. The shamanic creative process then interprets the original material in a meaningful way and conveys the material to the client or community in an understood form, potentially followed by integration, healing, and improved mental health in clients.
Indirect Relation of Shamanic Creativity to Pathology with 3rd/Moderating Factor contributes to eventual Mental Health. (SHC > T > P)	In Richard's original typology, the indirect relation of creativity to pathology involved a 3rd moderating factor, "T," which might involve social or familial disapproval through criticism, ostracism, or ridicule – demonstrating the importance of support for the pathological creative process.

	Richards observed that a lack of support or conflicts that could not be processed could lead to different forms of escape including alcoholism, decompensation, or poor coping. This escape dynamic might be seen in shamanic candidates, during shamanic illness when there is an attempt to avoid the calling. Maybe this is part of the cause of increased dissociation, poor functioning, substance abuse, etc.
Indirect Relation of Creativity to Pathology resulting in Mental health. (SHC > T > P > SH MH)	However, social support is given when pathology is interpreted as calling to shamanism. If calling is not accepted, pathology will be ongoing. If calling is accepted and process of training and initiation is completed, a shaman generally enjoys improved mental health.
Third Factor Affecting Both Shamanic Creativity and Pathology. (SHC < T ? > P)	Currently, no data is available regarding the presence of bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders in families of shamans, especially in first-degree relatives.
Direct Relation between Shamanic Creativity and Client Pathology that is Healed and results in Client Mental Health. (SHC > CL P > CL MH)	Additional dynamic and relationship with psychopathology and mental health. Shamanic creativity is applied as a technology for healing and as a way to gain unavailable information to benefit client suffering from pathology and support client regaining balance and mental health.

Notes:
Creativity and *psychopathology* are not emic concepts in shamanic cultures.
P signifies psychopathology.
SHC signifies shamanic creativity.
MH signifies mental health.
CL signifies the shaman's client(s) with CL P indicating client pathology and CL MH indicating a client's mental health.

When the typologies in Tables 18 and 19 are compared, considering relationships between creative processes, third factors, psychopathology, and outcomes, several important differences can be seen between general creativity and shamanic creativity. These differences also might distinguish many contemporary artists from shamans.

First, some symptoms of psychopathology are valued as signs indicating a future shaman. Within the dominant culture of the West, from the perspective of *Das Man,* psychopathology is not valued and may provoke ostracism and stigmatism. But, keep in mind that not all signs or forms of psychopathology indicate a future shaman.

Second, shamanic societies have beliefs, cosmologies, and means of interpretation that provide structure, context, and meaning to the pathological experiences and symptoms of shamanic candidates, apprentices, and practitioners. These ways are not available to most contemporary artists.

Third, although a shamanic candidate may suffer anxiety, decompensation, substance abuse, or attempt other forms of escape from calling, potentially exacerbating shamanic illness, accepting the calling and becoming a practicing shaman can result in improved, even superior, mental health. Creative individuals with psychopathology can achieve improved mental health, according to Richards (2000-2001), “under the right conditions” (p 117). Shamanic societies appear to provide the right conditions for some kinds of pathology to be transformed into mental health.

Fourth, shamanic creative processes can respond to and engage individual, familial, or societal pathologies. Shamanic practices can be used with the intent of transforming problems into more balanced, mentally healthier ways of being. There are

contemporary artists who also make art in response to pathology in others, including attempts to solve or transform problems.

Fifth, although data shows shamanism tends to cluster in families, there are no studies, to date, accessing the presence of psychopathology in shamanic families. As a result, we do not know if practicing shamans are likely to have first degree relatives with more severe expressions of psychopathology, especially disorders associated with creativity from the bipolar and schizophrenia spectrums. Therefore, this property cannot be compared to contemporary artists.

Sixth, shamanic societies have ways of differentiating someone with shamanic potential from someone who does not have shamanic potential. Furthermore, not everyone that accepts the calling to shamanism successfully completes training. Perhaps some of the failures are due to psychopathology that is too severe or not the appropriate type of mental illness. Alternatively, those who fail might lack important moderating factors.

In the data considered, there were several categories of moderating factors mentioned that influence the expression of creativity and may also affect mental illness and mental health: childhood experiences, cognition style, personality traits, physical qualities, and social factors. As shown in Table 20, specific moderating factors are considered for shamans, contemporary artists, and creativity. The latter category includes everyday creativity and eminent creativity.

Table 20

Some Moderating Factors

	Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Creativity
Childhood			
Early advantages	Often (shamanic family & culture)	Often	Often but not always found.
Memories of unhappiness	Yes, in a subset.	Often	Often in eminent creators. Less often in everyday creators.
Cognition			
Autonomous imagination	Yes	Yes	Not found. Might depend on field of endeavor.
Executive function	Yes	Yes	Yes
High or above average intelligence	Yes	Yes	Yes
Latent inhibition, lower than average	Apparently	Yes	Yes
Organized: reserve time and mental energy	Yes	Yes	Yes
Primary process, control	Yes	Yes	Not found for everyday creativity.
Psychological Traits			
Adaptable		Yes	Yes
Alert	Yes	Yes	Yes
Assertiveness	Yes	Yes	Yes
Confidence	Yes	Yes	Yes
Ego strength	Yes	Yes	Yes
Emotions: Appropriate affect	Not found, unknown, although I have observed a number of shamans and all showed appropriate affect.	Yes	Yes

Introversion	Yes	Yes	Yes, in eminent creators.
Motivated to create	Yes	Yes	Yes
Nonconformity	Yes	Yes	Varies, everyday creativity is not extremely deviant. Eminent creators are more likely to be nonconformists.
Perception, acute	Yes	Yes	Yes
Repression, lack of	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rewards, intrinsic, from being creative.	Yes	Yes	Yes
Self-discipline	Yes	Yes	Yes
Turbulence in later life.	Not found.	Yes, at least within a subset of individuals.	Yes, associated with eminent creators. Less likely in everyday creators.
Physical			
Energetic	Yes, some shamans are capable of dancing, drumming, singing all night.	Varies, but must be adequate to produce work. Artists often experience an upsurge of energy when starting work and this surge of energy can last for hours, even days.	Yes
Immune system disorder.	Some shamans appear to have immune system disorders as part of calling sickness, based on descriptions in literature of different forms of shamanic illness. However, no formal studies were performed on this topic.	Immune system disorders occur with more frequency in musicians as well as individuals who are left-handed, which is associated neurologically with heightened creativity.	Not reported

Immune system strengthened	Apparently, in some individuals after accepting call to shamanism but not yet formally studied.	Maybe, creative work might strengthen weak immune systems in some artists and even be required to maintain physical health.	Yes, with everyday creativity.
Sensitivity to environmental stimuli	Yes	Yes	
Social			
Opportunities	Yes, for training to undertake an important and valued social role.	Yes, but might be inadequate, only available to a few, expensive, or competitive. Access to some opportunities are controlled by institutional gatekeepers.	Yes
Participatory settings	Yes	Yes	Yes
Relationships, caring			Yes
Relationships, mentors	Master shaman who trains apprentice. Spirits who purportedly offer instruction.	Often. Social relationships and mentors are moderating factors and are required for success at the middle C/pro-c level of everyday creativity and for eminent achievement.	Yes
Rewards, extrinsic: Success	Yes. Recognized by society. Services sought by community. Some shamanic societies do not believe shamans should be paid because talent is a gift from spirit world, while shamans in other societies are paid or given gifts.	Extrinsic success, attention, recognition, and financial reward can be inspiring. There may be a lack of financial reward resulting in poverty or lack of venues to share work with audience.	Yes, creative endeavor "works."

Society recognizes signs of psychosis as valuable, indicating a future shaman or calling to become a shaman.	Yes	No	No
Society has developed ways to control psychosis that can be conveyed through training.	Yes	No, not through conventional formal art training. Might be present in art therapy.	Not found
Society benefits from ways in which some shamans control psychosis.	Yes, shaman is able to access information generally not available to community members.	No. But, do some artists gain control of psychosis or other symptoms of pathology, which somehow provides benefits to the art audience members?	If eminent creators somehow control psychosis, then society might benefit; however, this data was not present in the studies reviewed.
Support	Yes; however, there were and are societies in which shamans are ostracized or persecuted. In the not so distant past, Korean *shin-byung,* a shamanic illness indicating calling, resulted in the candidate and the candidate's family being stigmatized.	At times, support is available to some artists. At other times, in certain situations, or for certain individuals, support may be lacking. This moderating factor assists in the actualization of creativity but is not the same as social support provided to shamans.	Yes
Suppression, lack of	Yes. Shamans are often allowed to behave in ways forbidden to other members of community, do not have same taboos but may have different taboos such as food restrictions.	Preferably, not always. Suppression can provoke rebelliousness which leads to creativity (Singer-Song Writer/Musician John Lennon, painter Paul Gauguin, or sculptor Louise Nevelson).	Preferably

Note: "Yes" indicates this property enhances creativity or is associated with creativity and that this property was found to be present in some or most representatives of the population; however, not all members of each set benefit from all properties.

This consideration of moderating factors influencing the expression of creativity found that shamans, artists, and creative individuals benefit from many of the same factors.

Not all factors were found in all groups and the data considered was limited to studies sought out for other topics, so this information is admittedly incomplete. Nonetheless, the lists show what moderating factors would ideally be available to creative individuals in any field. Yet, many eminent creators did not come from supportive, nurturing, enriched environments replete with easily accessed opportunities.

Individual artists with more severe symptoms of psychopathology might not have as many, in quantity or quality, moderating factors. Does a lack of moderating factors result in a society determining psychotic symptoms are not indicating a calling to shamanism? Does a lack of moderating factors also as cause a candidate to not complete an apprenticeship?

Next is a comparison of different manifestations of mental illness and mental health in shamans, eminent creators/geniuses, artists including writers, clinical populations, and everyday creators. The comparisons are presented in Table 21.

What can we learn from this data? As noted earlier, there are family clusters of mental illness associated with everyday creativity, clinical populations, eminent creativity, and contemporary artists (which does not mean that all members of such families are mentally ill). Similar clusters of mental illness in shamanic families were not found in data considered and I did not find any studies that looked at the occurrence or prevalence of mental illness in shamanic families.

Table 21

Mental Illness and Mental Health in Shamans, Creators, and Clinical Populations

	Shamans	Eminent/Genius	Writers or Artists (Contemporary/ Nontraditional)	Clinical Population	Everyday Creativity
Family clusters of mental illness.	There are family clusters of shamans Data on clusters of mental illness in shamanic families was not found.	Yes, in studies with broad definitions of genius and broad definitions of mental illness not based on refined diagnostic categories, and in studies using eminent definition of genius and contemporary medical diagnostic categories due to compensatory advantages.	Found in early studies considering genius in which artists were included. Found in studies of writers (Jamison, 1995; Andreasen, 1997).	Yes. Family clusters of creativity (see Kinney et al, 2000-2001; Richards et al, 1988).	Yes, due to compensatory advantages from first-degree relatives with bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders. See Kinney et al, 2000-2001; Richards, 1990; Richards, 1999; Richards, 2000-2001; Richards,1988.
Mental illness	Some researchers considered shamans to be mentally ill. No formal studies performed exploring of how shamanic creativity or artistry is related to mental illness.	Mental illness is the exception (Leftwich, 2007), not the rule; yet, there is a higher prevalence of mental illness or subclinical, mild mental illness amidst eminent creators.	Higher prevalence than in control population, per Andreasen (1997), or general population Jamison (1995).	Yes, evidence of bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders higher in creative individuals; however, Schizotypy associated with high creativity.	Infrequent and unlikely in everyday creators. Subjects with mild, subclinical symptoms or 1st-degree relatives demonstrate peak creativity.

Mental illness continued	From culturally emic view, some forms of what could be interpreted as mental illness serve as indications of calling to shamanism and potential talents that become voluntarily controlled during apprenticeship.	The degree and kind of pathology varies according to field of endeavor.		
Mental health	Recent rigorous studies found shamans were mentally healthy or had superior mental health.	Schuldberg (1990) differentiated genius from madness based on moderating factors of ego strength, resilience, stress-resistance, physical health, and control of primary process. Creativity achieved by self-actualization accompanies mental health, contributing to peak and plateau experiences (Maslow, 1971).	Jamison: higher degrees of self-confidence and ego strength in participants associated with elevated mental health. Accompanies self-actualization.	Creativity enhances mental health and creativity is a sign of mental health. Accompanies self-actualization.

Social benefits from mental illness in creators	Yes, as part of process indicating a calling to shamanism and contributing to shamanic practices.	Yes, some aspects of mental illness enhance creative processes. Then, creative products might benefit society.	Yes, same as eminent creators.	Individuals and societies can project unacknowledged shadow onto people with mental illness. Can experience and appreciate forms of outsider art produced by mentally ill artists.	Yes
Compensatory advantages	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes, for milder forms, some symptoms, or presence in 1st degree relatives.	Yes, when mental illness is present in 1st degree relatives.
Low C or middle C forms of creativity	Some shamans are eminent geniuses, such as Norval Morrisseau who invented a new style of art. Other shamans work primarily within the low C or middle C forms of creativity that contributes to the preservation, enrichment, and continuity of culture in addition to other shamanic practices.	Early studies of genius defined genius broadly and included what today would be considered low C, middle C, or everyday creativity. Further, eminent creators do not "paint a masterpiece everyday" and different creative efforts may belong to different categories.	Artists vary in their degrees of creativity. Some artists qualify as eminent geniuses while other artists produce work of lower quality or less cultural significance.		Yes, as included within definition of everyday creativity.

However, if spirit communication and possession, visions, and so on are viewed from the Western, etic, medical view, then the shamanic families would probably be seen as having many psychotic members. This view might also perceive entire shamanic communities as showing signs of psychosis.

Depending on the population studied, degrees and kinds of mental illness found varied. With eminent creators, mental illness is the exception although there is a stronger presence, which might be mild or subclinical. In addition, the degree and kind of pathology varies according to field of endeavor. Psychopathology plays a larger part in populations of creative writers and other types of fine artists; nonetheless, most artists are mentally healthy or, again, show mild or subclinical, symptoms.

Clinical populations are defined by the diagnosis of psychopathology, which is said to be infrequent and unlikely in individuals who practice everyday creativity – even though the majority of artists are members of the everyday creativity subset middle C or pro-c creativity, without the eminent stature of jazz vocalist/composer Billie Holiday (1915-1959) or rock guitarist Jimi Hendrix (1942-1970).

At present, there are no studies looking at the relationship between psychopathology and creativity in shamans. Because of variations in the presence of psychopathology associated with different kinds of creativity as well as different kinds of creativity practiced by different kinds of shamans, data regarding psychopathology and creativity should not be blindly generalized onto all shamans.

When shamanic creativity is assessed in future studies, I anticipate that different individual shamans, different types of shamans, and different kinds of shamanic activities will be placed at many points along the spectrum of creativity, from low C and creativity,

through everyday creativity, including middle C creativity and pro-c creativity associated with expertise, and also eminent creativity.

There is creativity applied in reading sets of symptoms, making diagnosis, determining treatment strategies, and applying knowledge towards remedying the problem. There is another kind of creativity used to perform traditional prayers, invoke purported spirits, sing songs, dance, or tell established myths. These actions may qualify as middle C or pro-c creativity that maintain cultural traditions and might be performed by a master of the craft. There is a different kind of creativity, perhaps closer to deity-inspired divine madness, which purportedly involves receiving communications from the spirit world and then serving as a channel in the creation of original songs, dances, and stories. Yet, another kind of creativity responds to novel problems and arrives at novel solutions – which might or might not involve the use of art. Then, there is also a kind of eminent creativity; for example, artist and shaman Norval Morrisseau invented a new style of art. Therefore, all data from creativity studies, from any population, should not be blindly applied to all shamans.

Opinions of researchers have varied widely with regard to the mental health of shamans, generally polarized into shamans being mentally ill or shamans being mentally healthy. One rigorously designed study (van Ommeren et al., 2004) found the shamans in one refugee group to be as mentally healthy or more mentally healthy than the other members of the community. Another study (Stephen & Suryani, 2000) of a different population of shamans found that, from the medical etic perspective, shamanic candidates qualified as mentally ill; yet, after training and initiation, the same individuals were

deemed mentally healthy *with* psychotic features still evident. Moreover, the shamans had gained control of the psychosis, using it voluntarily in their shamanic practices.

Importantly, because shamans appear to have a different mental illness-mental health trajectory and outcome, shamans may comprise a unique category of creativity that is different from most artists, eminent creators, clinical populations, and everyday creativity. This unique category might be due to established traditions of social support as set out in Figure 22.

We must also keep in mind that from an emic perspective, as seen from those who believe in the spiritual realities of their shamanic cosmologies, psychopathology might not be seen as psychopathology or not wholly as psychopathology. From an emic, shamanic view, the Enlightenment philosophical beliefs and values and Western medicine, disspirited and desacralized, might be seen as psychopathological, suffering from sickness, dissociation from the natural and spiritual worlds, enslaved by commercial and material spirits.

Potentially, there may also be an as yet undefined category of mentally healthy, high functioning shamanistic creators that have a developed a mostly beneficial relationship with psychopathology. Thus far, this tripartite combination of superior mental health, high functioning, *and* the presence of psychotic symptoms associated with creativity have not identified a subset of artists that may also have properties of shamanism.

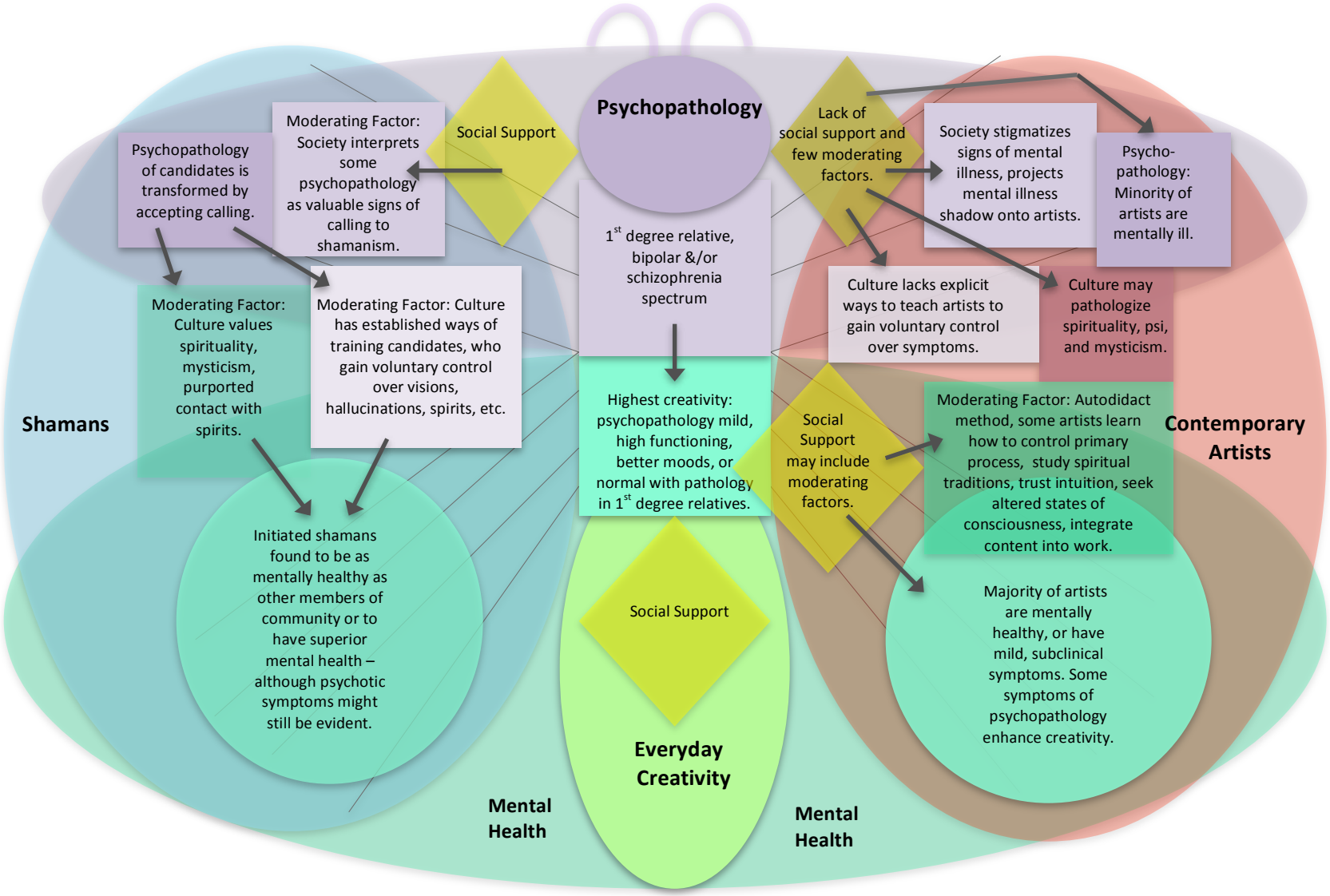


Figure 22. Patterns of psychopathology and mental health affected by social support in shamans, creators, and artists.

These shamanistic artists might have a number of moderating factors such as ego strength, might have sought out knowledge regarding spiritual practices, might be strong in transliminality with purported paranormal experiences, might have invented practices that control psychosis, and might have a different relationship with psychopathology than what has been identified thus far. But, these ideas are based on pattern recognition and intuition, requiring future research for development, confirmation, or disconfirmation.

Table 22 compares shamanic candidates, initiated shamans, contemporary artists, individuals with psychosis, and everyday creators vis-à-vis various symptoms of psychosis. The symptoms compared in Table 22 include hallucinations, nihilistic delusions, ideas of reference, or "knight's move thinking," an indication of a thought disorder in which there is a loosening of associations and "a fragmentation in thought patterns which results in an illogical move from one topic to another" (Rigby, 2008, p. 50).

Table 22

Medical Model of Psychosis: Shamans, Artists, Everyday Creativity

Symptoms	Shamanic Candidates or Initiated Shamans	Contemporary Artists	Individuals with Psychosis	Everyday Creators
Derealization or ability to leave sensate reality, alter states of consciousness, take journeys to alternate realms.	May experience altered state of consciousness, might experience journey to nonconsensual realms. Introversion or sense of being overwhelmed may lead shaman to seek solitude.	May enter altered states of consciousness, including imaginal realm, degrees of dissociation during creative process. Introversion or sense of being overwhelmed may lead artist to seek solitude. Can access primal material, escape limitations of era and culture	Feel self or environment as separate and apart from consensual reality.	Not reported.
Deterioration of functioning.	May occur during shamanic illness, before accepting calling. Generally not after apprentice is initiated.	Varies, "yes" for minority of artists who are pathological, "no" for artists who are not pathological. May also vary according to mood state.	Yes	No

Hallucinations or visions.	Valued as visions, source of knowledge, and communication from spirits or deities. Autonomous imagination experienced as external reality.	Reported by a subset of artists. Purported visions provide important knowledge or communications. May be part of belief in spirits or deity(s). Can be caused by hallucinogens or entheogens. Deliberately utilized by artists such as Alex Grey for spiritual purposes and to obtain information.	Psychotic hallucinations can be distressing, voices can attack individual, kinesthetic hallucinations can cause pain or discomfort.	Not reported in everyday creativity.
Ideas of reference or meaning making.	May interpret events as signs from spirits or deities, or interpret events as meaningful or significant. May feel frightened by experiences of spirits prior to initiation.	May project meaning or significance onto events, may use events to construct meaning. Usually not frightening or threatening. One way in which art becomes meaningful to creator or audience. An example is Lauren Raine, also my interpretation of the similarities between a painted image and my son's appearance.	Fantasy, believe that events refer to self. May feel frightened and threatened. Can include paranoia.	Not reported. However, one measure of creativity involves meaningfulness, not just originality. Not frightening or threatening.
Knight's move thinking or lowered latent inhibition.	In milder form, numerous associations *might* result from reduced latent inhibition, and altered dopaminergic function.	In milder form, resulting from generation of multiple associations, reduced latent inhibition, and altered dopaminergic function, produces many associations and ideas.	deas with erratic, uncommon links difficult for others to follow. Linked to dopaminergic function and reduced latent inhibition.	Not reported in everyday creativity; but, in milder form, lowered latent inhibition may provide more associations and ideas as a result of dopaminergic function.

	Mild form enhances associations and ideas, helps construct metaphors.	Can inspire art such as James Joyce stream of consciousness or Gerard Manley Hopkins poetry, also surrealist visual art.	Thinking style causes anxiety and lowers social function.	
Magical thinking or direct cause and effect magic. (Can be viewed as indication of schizotypy.)	Belief in reality and efficacy of magic. Perform rituals and other practices to influence thoughts, acts, emotions, future events, distant events. Community as a whole participates in magical thinking, including beliefs in paranormal and experiences of psi.	Some artists create art to influence thoughts, acts, emotions, future events. Some artists believe their artwork can serve as a divination practice, deliberately or spontaneously, or serve as a gateway to paranormal experiences. Seen in intended purpose of some traditional folk arts.	Symptom of schizotypy or schizophrenia.	Not reported
Mysticism.	Seen as sign of future shaman or occurs during shaman's practice. Also reflects cosmological under-standing of the interrelatedness of all things.	Yes, in a subset. Valued by some artists and highly influential in development of some art styles such as abstraction.	Diagnosed as sign of pathology by some researchers. Can be seen as lack of reality testing and poor boundaries.	Not reported in everyday creativity. Can accompany self-actualization during peak experiences or plateau experiences.

		Mysticism often accompanies self-actualized creativity, peak experience, and plateau experience.		
Nihilistic delusions or imaginal reality of ritual death or disintegration.	May experience dismemberment, flesh stripped from bones, death, etc. during initiation.	Not found in data considered yet is depicted in work by artists including Alex Grey.	Experiencing rotting, decomposing, solidifying, death.	Not found.
Paranormal experiences or abilities. (Can be viewed as symptom of schizotypy.)	Shamanic communities believe in reality of paranormal experiences. Childhood demonstration of purported paranormal abilities interpreted as sign of future shaman. Some shamans use paranormal abilities during practice according to reports.	Reported by some artists. A subset of artists practiced spiritism to experience paranormal. Some artists reported spontaneous paranormal experiences. In tests of paranormal abilities, artists achieve higher scores.	Would be interpreted, according to medical model, as symptoms of psychosis.	Not found. However, in tests of paranormal abilities, creative individuals achieve higher scores.
Prognosis for psychopathology.	When practicing shaman, individual continues to experience what could be interpreted as psychosis; yet, is high functioning, respected and valued in community, and able to control process.	For some artists, creating art might help gain control over some symptoms and alleviate suffering.	May go into remission with absent of all symptoms, may stabilize, or function may deteriorate further with worsening symptoms.	Does not apply. Typically, psychopathology not present in this group.

Rebirth experience or delusion, transformation, renewal, reintegration.	Yes, during initiation process	Yes, during reintegration associated with creativity (see the following section, "Walking, Falling, and Soaring."	Not found.	Not reported.
Spirituality	Yes, structured by cultural beliefs and cosmology.	Jamison (1993): 20% of population reported religious thoughts or feelings during intense creative episodes; diagnosed Walt Whitman's mystical experiences as hypomania. D. Halpern (1994): recognized spirituality and visionary natures of poets studied.		Not reported.
Spirit possession	Some shamans report being possessed by spirits or deities; spirit possession may be interpreted by a shamanic society as calling to shamanism. Apprentice gains control over possession during training.	Historically, in Classical Greece, inspiration resulted from poet being possessed by a deity during "divine madness." Within medical model, spirit possession or communications with spirits, such as William Blake, interpreted as symptoms of psychosis and psychopathology.	Within medical model, report of spirit possession might be interpreted as symptom of psychosis.	Not reported.

Thought insertion or possession.	Reported receiving communication and ideas from spirits, being possessed by spirits, which is mostly controlled by initiated shaman. Thoughts and messages are organized according to shamanic belief structures and cosmology.	In Plato, referred to as divine madness, inspiration from deities. Some artists felt themselves possessed. Some artists believed they received communications, inspiration, and ideas from spirits, during which time thoughts, or ideas, were provided. Degree of control varies between different artists or within one artist's experiences. Creating art helps organize experience.	Experience of thoughts being inserted by others, difficult to organize or control thoughts.	Not reported.
Thought broadcasting or telepathy.	Believe in and attempt practice of telepathy.	Some artists believe in and attempt practice of telepathy. Some artists experience spontaneous telepathy. Many artists attempt to convey ideas, emotions, and thoughts to audience through works of art.	Some individuals with pathology believe their thoughts are broadcast to others, without ability to control process.	Not reported. However, highly creative individuals score higher on tests assessing psi abilities than individuals who are less creative. Peak creativity was associated with 1st degree relative with psychopathology.

Note: Symptoms of psychosis derived primarily, but not exclusively, from Sorenson (n.d.).

What differentiates shamans and mentally healthy artists, who also have behaviors and thought patterns that could be seen as psychotic, from individuals who are drowning in psychosis? "The critical factor differentiating genius from madness," noted Schuldberg (1990), "may be ego strength, referring to resiliency, stress-resistance, a sense of physical mental well-being, and facility for controlling one's primary process productions" (p. 219). Primary process is the "free-associative, concrete, irrational and autistic; it is the matter of dreams and reveries, and in its more extreme forms it is the thought of psychosis," explained Eysenck (1999), while "Secondary process thinking is abstract, logical and reality-oriented; it is the thoughts of everyday, waking reality" (p. 179).

> In all this we may detect an ambiguity, an ambivalence, and a paradox; the genius is mad, but the mad are not geniuses. Clearly this madness differs in kind from that observed so frequently in the unfortunate victims of true madness; the genius is both mad and not-mad. (Eysenck, 1995, p. 18)

What are the methods used by geniuses to control primary process? Are these methods similar to those used by shamans to control psychosis? These are additional questions for future research.

Moreover, researchers must also hold in mind culturally sensitive, emic points of view that might differ from a medical model or normative model of mental health. From a cross-cultural, postmodern perspective, "deviance need not be judged by one set of rules – that is, people may be judged according to the rules of the group to which they belong," with deviance "defined as divergent attitudes and behaviors that arise out of a specific culture, allowing overt behaviors to mean different things to different people. The only valid interpretation depends on individual indigenous cultural norms" (Jackson, 2006, p. 310). Jackson recognized problems inherent in the conformity model when there

is an “imposition of majority group values on minority group members….” (p. 310) and this dynamic can occur when the etic medical model of mental health is imposed on shamanic cultures, and perhaps at times, on subcultures of contemporary artists.

The foregoing section looked carefully at the interrelationships, processes, and cultural constructs involving mental health, mental illness, and creativity with regards to several populations, including shamans, contemporary artists, eminent creators, everyday creators, and clinical populations.

In two studies executed with rigorous methods, shamans were found to be mentally healthy or to have superior mental health (Stephen & Suryani, 2000; van Ommeren et al., 2004). Stephen and Suryani found shamanic candidates showed features of psychosis and qualified as mentally ill; yet, as practicing shamans, the same individuals were mentally healthy or had superior mental health while continuing to show signs of psychosis. There was a transformation from mental illness to mental health when the shamans gained control over psychosis. This achievement may partly be due to kinds of social support available in shamanic communities, where some forms of psychosis are valued.

The tripartite phenomena, mentally healthy with psychotic symptoms and high functioning, has not been reported in previous research on Low C, Middle C, eminent, everyday, or artistic creators. Therefore, some shamans may comprise a unique class of creators with distinctive features and there may be a subset of contemporary artists who are similar to shamans, with average or superior mental health, control over psychosis, and high functioning. These artists might also comprise a unique class of creators.

Alternatively, the mentally healthy-controlled psychotic shamans might be similar to creators who have mild or subclinical symptoms of schizophrenia or bipolar spectrum disorders. Without the same assessment tools and diagnostic categories, it is difficult to know if the recent studies of shamans have results that are comparable to studies of various creative populations. Also, many shamans may qualify for previously established sets of creators, Low C, Middle C, eminent, etc. categories, depending on their practices and achievements. Although there is a need for future research to tease apart the differences and identify the similarities between shamans and other creative populations, it is clear that research on psychopathology and creativity cannot be blindly generalized onto all shamans. There are also research opportunities in exploring the social importance of mental illness in creators. We might discover that the mental diseases of shamans and contemporary artists are necessary, in part, to set up experiences of unease in the community, bringing problems into the spotlight of communal attention as part of the process of effecting change.

Reflections of a Shadow I Once Knew. Denita Benyshek, April 26, 2012.
Drawing, painting, collage, photo montage.

Before the Fall, Denita Benyshek, 2012, photo montage.

The importance of unbalancing systems.

Oracle: "The purpose of the Architect is to balance the equation."
Neo: "What's your purpose?"
Oracle: "To unbalance it."

From the film, *Matrix Revolutions* (Wachowski & Wachowski, 2003).

To get from an unhealthy trait to a healthy one requires that one destabilize the system.

Symposium on Chaos Theory (Abraham, 2010),
American Psychological Association.

Why is it important to unbalance and destabilize a system? How can we understand and reconcile the paradox of creativity that is associated, at least to a mild degree, with mental illness while creativity also has the potential to enhance mental health?

By embracing both mental illness and mental health, through a Janusian process that can look two directions, seeing seeming opposites at the same time, holding awareness in the same cognitive space, tasting vinegar and sugar, in recognition of mutual interdependence, in ever whirling, interpenetrating, stirred together states, and how the dynamic revolutions of creative cycles and even life itself requires tacking back and forth between balance and unbalance, stability and destabilization – to simply move forward. As performance artist Laurie Anderson (1982) noted, we fall forward each time we take a step:

> Over and over, you're falling.
> And then catching yourself from falling.
> And this is how you can be walking and falling
> at the same time.

and this is how a creator can be mentally ill and mentally healthy

at the same time

walking and falling

and moving forward

catching yourself

voting and cleaning

and taking out trash

navigating

uncharted seas

well-crafted ships

riding waves

with the oceanographers named Alpha, Theta, Gamma

dip and rise

across and through

the inverted U

the poet's bell jar

on a gray lab tray

folding pages

treatments

assessments

diagnoses

telephone calls

evaluations

prescriptions

calendar pages

prognosis

consultation

appointments

admissions

worry

folded

into paper airplanes

soaring through

the door frame

of a painting

through the window

of a poem

tasting joy of

blue sky.

Theorists have applied different concepts to describe the processes of walking, falling, diving, swimming, resurfacing, regaining balance – or drowning. The following description of this process integrates ideas from antipsychiatry (Cooper, 1967). Dynamic systems theory is applied to the affect of music and lyrics on personality (Djikic, 2011), regression in service of ego (Knafo, 2002; Shweder, 1972), tertiary process and pleroma (Clarkson, 2001; Schwartz-Salant, 1989), transliminality (Thalbourne, 2009), chaos theory metaphors (Schuldberg, 2000-2001), and integrative consciousness (Winkelman, 2010).

The model is presented in Figure 23, showing how an initially stable stage can be disrupted. Further explanation follows.

The first stage is stable and balanced, a state that might be maintained through repression (Winkelman, 2010).

Second, something serves as a catalyst and the system is destabilized and unbalanced. A "*crystallization of discontent*" occurs "before significant life changes…and in developmentally active life periods" (Djikic, 2011, p. 237). Due to heightened sensitivity, discontent become awareness of a problem, a need, or a conflict. Speaking of shamans, Winkelman (2010) wrote, "Even dissociative and pathological states can destabilize waking consciousness in ways that permit the manifestation of integrative potentials and experiences" (Winkelman, p. 4). An art experience, whether in an artist or in an art audience member, can serve as a catalyst for change, causing a system to fluctuate and become unstable (Djikic, 2011).

> According to dynamical systems theory, change in stable systems (including psychological systems) is preceded by a type of discontinuity called critical fluctuations…. One can see an increased variability in the system before it reorganizes and transitions to a new stable level. (Djikic, p. 237)

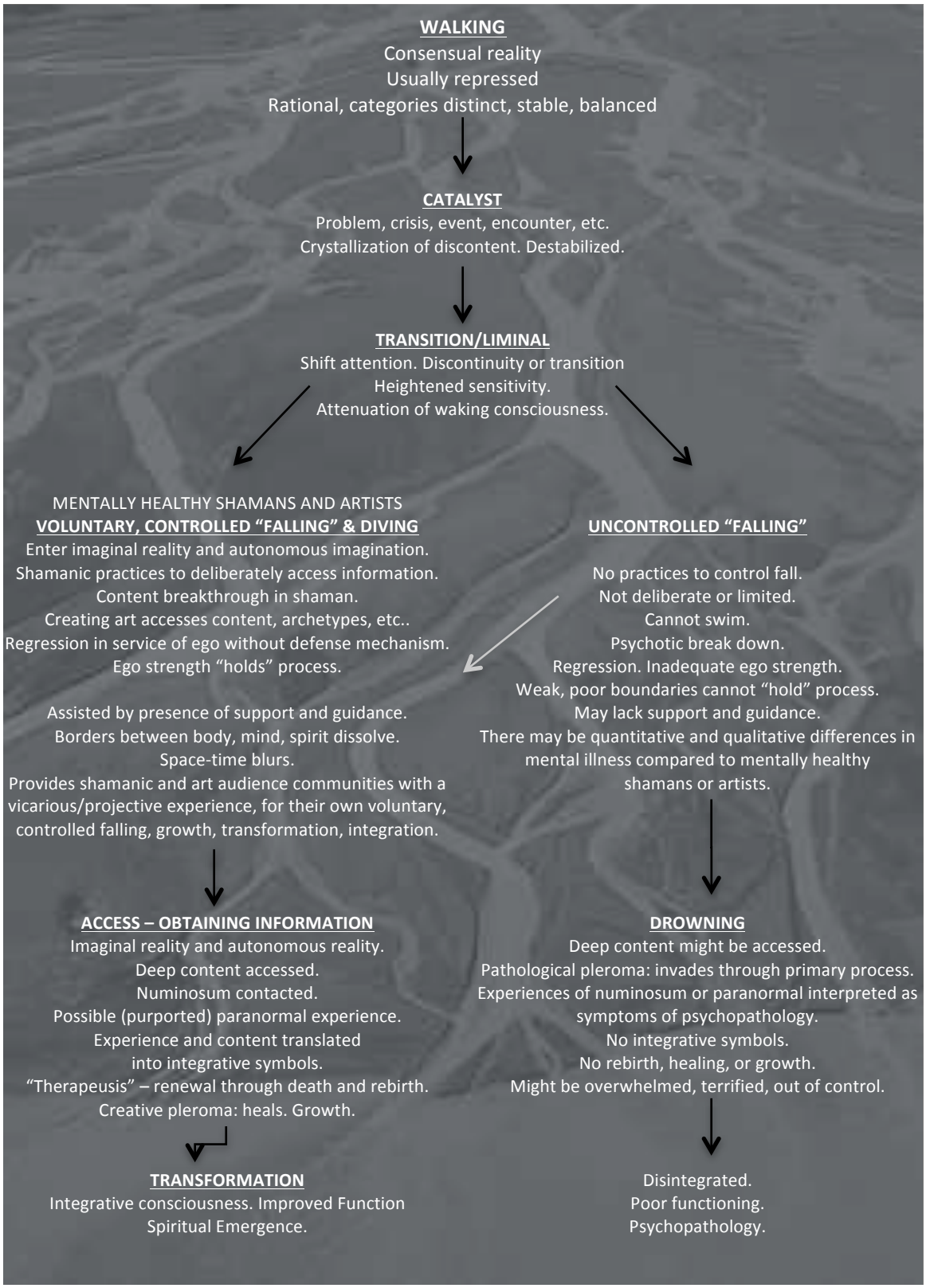


Figure 23. Comparison of positive *disintegration, reintegration, and transformation of mentally healthy shamans and artists to disintegration leading to mental illness.*

Third, a transition occurs in which attention is shifted, metaphorically crossing a threshold. "The waking mode of consciousness," Winkelman (2010, p. 4) explained, becomes attenuated. Shamans are capable of voluntarily performing regression in service of ego (Shweder, 1972); similarly, regression allows artists to access kinds and levels of consciousness not available to most adults (Knafo, 2002). Although regression can be an important part of creative process, the term "regression" comes with a pejorative connotation.

In Freudian theory, regression is a return to an earlier life stage, functioning as a defense mechanism and indicating mental pathology (Corsini, 2002). This definition implies backward movement and the presence of immature behaviors. Following Freud backwards, Kris believed creativity occurred during a return to an earlier developmental level (Corsini, 2002), during "regression in service of the ego" (p. 821). In contrast to the pathological concept of regression, Krippner (2000a) offered an alternate concept, stating shamans "engage in activities that enable them to access information not ordinarily attainable by members of the social group that has granted them shamanic status."

The transitions in attention and other aspects of consciousness are often conceived as occurring at certain places within certain kinds of space; for example, as within a liminal zone or what Schwartz-Salant (1989) called the *pleroma*:

> This space is a transitional area between the space-time world (where processes are characterized as an interaction of objects) and the collective unconscious – the pleroma. This area has a fundamentally different quality from the space-time world. In its pathological form, the pleroma invades the conscious personality as primary-process thinking. But in its creative form, it is the source of healing through one's experience of the numinosum. (p. 107)

Clarkson (2001) further described how:

> As one enters the tertiary process, the categories that appear distinct in the secondary process of the rational space-time world begin to blur and the imagination takes over as the principal faculty. Synaesthesia is the norm, with sense modalities (vision, hearing, touch, bodily sensations, and spatial perceptions, etc.) blending in surprising combinations. Past and future interflow with the here-and-now. Logical and causal orderings give way to acausal synchronicities. And last, but not least, the borders between body, mind, and spirit begin to dissolve, which accounts for subtle body phenomena and the numinosity of experiences in the tertiary process. (pp. 94-95)

Clarkson (2001) used European American composer John Cage (1912-1992) as an example of an artist who seemed to obtain information from the pleroma through tertiary processes. Cage could lose awareness of space and time, feel the pleasure of being complete, existing within air that is

> so alive that one is simply part of it, sounds centered within themselves in an infinite play of interpenetration, the union of spirit and matter that partakes of the miraculous, moving out in all directions from the center when time is luminous, not interrupting the fluency of nature, and participating in the life of sounds. (Clarkson, 2001, p. 95)

Fourth, there is either a deliberate, voluntary practice that provides control over the experience of imaginal reality, autonomous imagination, or the experience of purported spirits.

Alternatively, there is an involuntary fall into psychosis.

However, in lived experience the two experiences might overlap or be mutually dependent. Carl Jung tried, unsuccessfully to "treat" the schizophrenic daughter of author James Joyce. To Jung, James Joyce and his daughter were "like two people going to the bottom of a river, one falling and the other diving" (Maddox, 2000, p. 301).

Instead of falling into madness and drowning like his daughter, James Joyce dove deep. He deliberately accessed information generally unavailable to readers, crafting the information, returning to the surface as the information gained form and structure crafted

in writing. The daughter demonstrated erratic knight's move-thinking, seemingly illogical, divergent, vertical, lateral, sometimes skipping steps in logic, jumping ahead in a non-linear fashion, sometimes achieving unanticipated results (see Rickard, 1988). Maddox (2000) believed the daughter's example provided Joyce with inspiration and access to alternate forms of thought and being.

Thalbourne (2009) concluded that, in some people:

> Only certain types or quantities of ideation or affect are allowed to 'cross the threshold' into consciousness; whereas in another the threshold is, relatively speaking, much more permeable, allowing through into the supraliminal region more, and perhaps in some sense 'deeper,' material. Persons high in transliminality will, relatively speaking, experience a much larger number of different types of input from the subliminal regions, whereas others, lower in transliminality, may hear from that region on considerably fewer occasions. Thus, paranormal belief and experience can be said to be one consequence amongst many of a mind high in transliminality. Mystical experience and creativity are other such consequences. (p. 120)

Consider the meaning of access. As a noun, access is a means of approaching, entering, communicating with, making use of, or exiting (Arieti, 1976). As a verb, access obtains, reaches, or retrieves (Access, 2011). Access allows multidirectional movement and relatedness through communication. Artists and shamans *access* during creativity.

Perhaps departure from static mental states considered healthy is necessary for artists and shamans, allowing access to other realms, and providing transient instability required for later integration. Instead of dualist separation of madness or mental health, shamans and artists experience both as part of a greater cycle of transformation. Perhaps artists and shamans not only experience mood dis-orders but mood re-orders as well. As Runco (1997) stated, "health and illness are paradoxically intertwined (p. 483).

Instead of linear, unidirectional, creative flow may be more like the intertwining channels of a braided river that are continually shifting.

Aerial photograph. Magnificent braided river delta with red and green flora showing at low tide. Alaska, Lower Cook Inlet, Kachemak Bay, National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Association Photo Library, No. 5066, November 16, 2010. Retrieved April 26, 2012 from www.commons.wikimedia.com.

The frameworks of understanding structured by nonlinear dynamical and chaotic systems offers a way to understand the interrelationships of psychopathology and creativity from which Schuldberg (2000-2001) saw "human functioning in both its sublime and its more troubling aspects…." (p. 14). Creativity emerges from "a system of interacting components, changing with time, and with nonlinear causal connections

linking at least some of the contributing variables….under certain conditions, it may be capable of chaotic behavior" (Schuldberg, p. 14). He added:

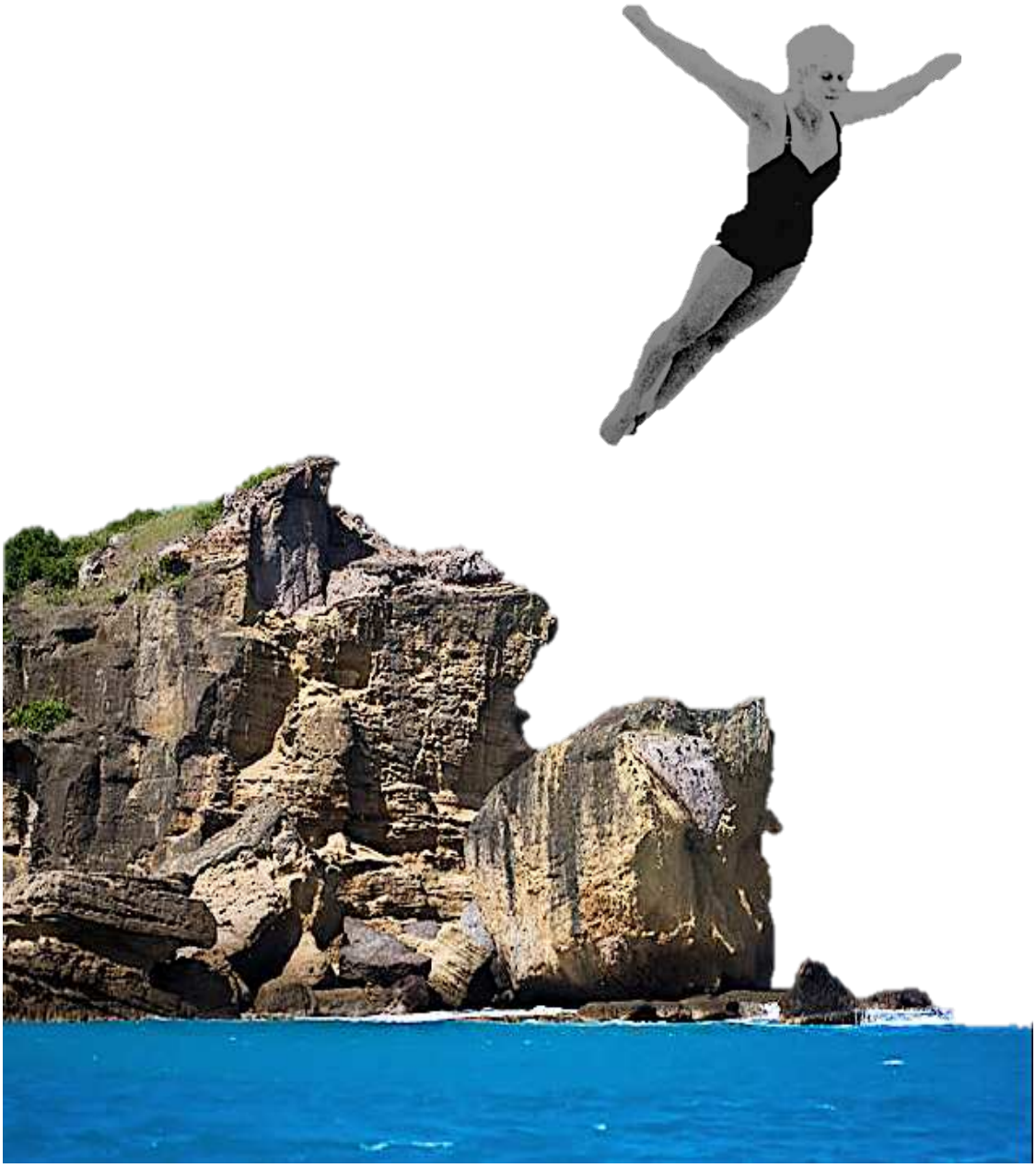
> Several characteristics of chaotic systems are especially relevant to the problems of understanding creativity. First, systems in chaotic regimes are extremely sensitive to initial conditions. Small differences in starting point, as well as small chance environmental influences, can have large and increasingly divergent effects on course and outcome. This provides a way to understand the role of serendipity and a number of other phenomena. Second, the path of a chaotic system never returns to the same place while also going in the same direction. This provides a definition of novelty and originality. (p. 14)

Fifth, if psychosis does not occur and if there is adequate voluntary control, then there might be entry into an imaginary realm, to imaginal reality, autonomous imagination, possible visionary states, ecstasy, peak experience, or other forms of alternate states of consciousness. Individuals with adequate or superior mental health may access integrative consciousness (Winkelman, 2010) after earlier disintegration.

Dabrowski (1976) theorized that an ongoing cycle of disintegration and reintegration is integral to individual development. Flach (1997) explored the disruptive-reintegrative nature of creativity, asserting that in "day to day living, problems crack the structures of life" (p. 182). Re-establishing health requires the "building of new, more suitable and more adaptive ones" (p. 182). From time-to-time, however, the cracks expand and the structures of life collapse. Instead of coping in a creative, productive, transformative way, some individuals further deteriorate, disintegrate, and lose functioning, sinking deeper into mental illness.

Sixth, transformation may occur. If a spiritual crisis served as the catalyst for this process, or erupted during the process, it can "indicate an onsetting process of restructuring an individual's life" (Heinze, 1991, p. 207), which can be ongoing.

Spiritual emergence.



Denita Benyshek, 2012, *From Stone Comes Flight,* photo montage.

In their consideration of transpersonal crisis with features of shamanic illness, Christina and Stan Grof (1986) recognized “that traditional psychiatry does not recognize

the difference between mystical and psychotic experiences" (p. 7). They "suggested that spiritual emergencies (transpersonal crises) can actually be therapeutic and transformative" (p. 7).

While transpersonal episodes of a shamanic nature, if properly supported, can ultimately result in superior functioning, an understanding and supportive structure for spiritual emergence would not eliminate all forms of mental illness. As Walsh (2007) cautioned:

> Two major diagnostic errors can be made. One is reductionistic: to fail to recognize a spiritual emergency and reduce it to pure pathology. The other is "elevationistic": to overlook a pathological process such as schizophrenia and elevate it to a spiritual emergency. The task is complicated by the existence of hybrid forms in which both mystical and pathological experiences coexist. (p. 113)

Transpersonal orientation: Manitou personality. A shaman's self also develops through the integration of the cultural script prescribing the shaman's role. In this way, the shaman is not only trained to be the repository or library of culture but is also the creation of culture. The shaman's personality further develops through stronger, yet more intimate, relationships with "divine others" and "sacred others" (Holm, 1997; Pandian, 1997). Through symbolic communication, which can include various art forms, qualities of higher beings are incorporated into the shaman's personality. Ideals from mythology also provide traits that are integrated into the shaman's personality (Winkelman, 2010).

Within the Ojibwe shamanic culture, there is a kind of personality or spiritual developmental stage referred to as *manitou* (Grim, 1987). Via an extraordinary state of concentration during trance:

> The shaman evokes the power presence of his personal manitou patron. With the development of the shaman's trance abilities this power presence becomes an abiding aspect of the shaman's psyche.
>
> Transformation follows from the shaman's meditative evocation of manitou and deepens the trance experience. For the shaman becomes the power he evokes.... Having sacrificed his own personal identity, the shaman assumes the singular personality associated with his manitou patron. (Grim, p. 167)

Thus, an individual's personality is transformed into the shamanic manitou personality, which then provides the shamanic community a means of access to manitou. Within the shamanic manitou spiritual personality, are traits associated with healing, divination, spirit communication, trance mediation, and ritual leadership.

In a psychological study comparing spiritual masters from different traditions, including one shaman, Jonte-Pace (2004) found the masters' test responses did not center on individual concerns. Instead, test responses focused on religious traditions and practices, evincing a transpersonal orientation. Jonte-Pace commented, "the masters were enmeshed in their spiritual traditions to such a degree that inner life became indistinguishable from the spiritual teachings" (p. 143). Moreover, instead of responding to each Rorschach image individually, the spiritual masters provided a single, integrated, coherent response to all Rorschach images.

According to Assagioli (1976), geniuses gifted in one domain have a "specialized creativity" arising from intuitive flashes or moments of inspiration. In contrast, Assagioli found a "universal, manifold creativity" in geniuses who are spiritually integrated, self-realized, and creative in multiple fields. Such universal creators are continually in relationship with what Assagioli referred to as the *superconscious,* defined by Battista (1996) as "a transpersonal and transcendent fountain of spiritual energy that can be

contacted through a wide variety of techniques and practices such as meditation, active imagination, and music" (p. 57).

As Wilber (1980) recognized, the resulting process and products reach "beyond the limitations of both," the "*preverbal* (primary process)" and the "*verbal* (secondary process) – and above and beyond both, as a magic synthesis, there is *transverbal*: intentionality, high-phantasy, and the vision-image" (p. 65). In this regard, as Wilber understood, mystics and shamans do not undergo regression in service of ego but, instead, evolve "in transcendence of the ego" (p. 152).

Beyond growth needs and self-actualization is a "postconventional level of development" described by Funk (2000) as "well-integrated...ego development" that "is likely to facilitate inspired creativity and genius" (p. 66). Furthermore:

> Postconventional development is more likely to allow for non-ordinary sources to influence the creator, be they dreams, primary thought processes, transcendent states, and so on. This is so because the rigid boundaries of the conventional egoic stance have become more permeable. The subject/object distinction, so crucial to ordinary functioning as well as to scientific endeavor, becomes increasingly less powerful, more transparent as constructs, as development proceeds. Thus, the barriers to numinous experience become less defended, less rigid. (Funk, p. 66)

Transpersonal perspectives offer alternative interpretations of unusual experiences previously attributed to schizotypy. Transient peak experiences (see Leftwich, 2008) and enduring plateau experiences (see Maslow, 1971) are marked by a transcendence of time and space, miraculous and mundane. There is illumination, mystical revelation, and profound awareness of beauty. Whereas peak experience is ecstatic and intense, plateau experiences are ongoing, sustained, quiet, sacred, serene, wonderful, and filled with bliss, awe, unity, and gratitude (Krippner, 1972).

Obtaining Information and Unavailable Ways: Chapter Summary

Shamans obtain information in ways that appear to include purported psi abilities, personality types associated with creativity, and specialized neurological processes. As discussed elsewhere in this dissertation, genetic sources, familial environments, and cultural capital also contribute to a shaman's repertoire of knowledge.

Some of these ways may be genetic inasmuch as shamanism tends to run in families. Possible genetic influence, common to subsets of shamans and contemporary artists, may also be seen in certain kinds or clusters of personality traits, purported paranormal experiences and psi powers that appear to be stronger in some families, and spectrums of bipolar and schizophrenic personality disorders that appear to be partly influenced by genes.

Certain neurologic processes also appear to differentiate shamans, artists, and different kinds of creative individuals from other groups; however, there is a lack of comparable studies specifically on artists and shamans. Some neurological processes, namely dopaminergic functions, specific brain wave patterns, synchronization, and integration, seem to be more prevalent in artists. Shamanic practices such as drumming, chanting, and dancing can elevate dopamine levels and this neurotransmitter shift is known to aid divergent thinking, considered by many researchers as indicative of creativity.

Shamanic societies have ways to distinguish forms of mental and/or physical illness that indicate a calling to shamanism from illness that does not represent a calling. Social support is provided to individuals with shamanic illness who receive special recognition, respect, training in accessing, controlling, and utilizing powers, talents, and

purported spirits. These social ways provide meaning, purpose, and a valued role to a candidate with symptoms. These kinds of social support are not generally available to contemporary artists who are not members of shamanic communities.

Chapter 8: Voluntary Regulation of Attention

Hippocampi at Dusk, Denita Benyshek, 2011, engraved and painted glass, photo montage.

> Any object, intensely regarded, may be a gate of access
> to the incorruptible eon of the gods.
>
> James Joyce (1918-1920/1990), *Ulysses.*

During apprenticeship, future shamans develop the ability to voluntarily regulate their attention. *Voluntary* (2010) actions proceed "from the will or from one's own choice or consent" and are "unconstrained by interference." Voluntary actions are self-determined, intentional, and freely chosen. With regards to shamans, Krippner explained:

> The shaman is able to shift states of consciousness at will and move from one state of consciousness to another, whether it's shamanic journeying, talking to the spirits, incorporating benevolent power animals, or visiting so-called upper and lower worlds. Shamans exercise these abilities to obtain wisdom, to accrue power, and to discover knowledge that's not available to them in their ordinary state of consciousness. Such abilities are not available to other members of their community -- who do not have shamanic talents. (Raynes, 2008)

For many researchers, the voluntary quality of shamanic practices differentiated shamans from mediums (see Heinze, 1991). In actuality, some shamans experience spirit possession involuntarily (Lewis, 1984) and the absolute division of shamans from mediums does not convey the lived reality of many shamans (Wallis, 2003). In general, if a spirit possesses a shaman, then the shaman chose to be possessed and invited the possessing spirit for a limited time. Typically, shamans control spirits instead of being controlled by spirits.

The balian of Indonesia establish a positive relationship with inner voices and visions so that "they can then be controlled – invoked and stopped at will" (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 23). Walter reported that Nepalese "Shamans and lineage mediums repeatedly told me their minds remained exceptionally clear and focused during spirit possession" (as cited in Feraca, 2001). The voluntary nature of a shaman's actions also distinguishes the shaman from someone who is mentally ill.

Regulate (2011) is defined as the act of governing or directing "according to rule," "to bring under the control of law or constituted authority... to bring order, method, or uniformity to" and "to fix or adjust the time, amount, degree, or rate of." To *regulate* (2010) means "to govern or direct… to bring under the control of law or constituted authority… to bring order, method, or uniformity… to fix or adjust the time, amount, degree, or rate;" whereas the noun *regulation* (2010) refers to "the act of regulating… the state of being regulated… an authoritative rule dealing with details or procedure…."

Regulation of attention is in contrast to perseveration, an "inability to shift between modes of thinking" which indicates "a lack of cognitive flexibility" (Dietrich, 2004, p. 4).

As the first mystical tradition, shamanism developed "the ability of mind, intention, and consciousness to control the physiological basis from which they arise" (Winkelman, 2010, p. 7). Ainu shamans, in ASC, could perform "various types of 'miracles,' including diagnosis and prophecy" (Tanaka, 2003).

Attention (2010) is an "act or state of applying the mind to something…a condition of readiness for such attention involving especially a selective narrowing or focusing of consciousness and receptivity," a kind of "observation" or taking "notice; especially…consideration with a view to action" and "sympathetic consideration of the needs and wants of others." A practicing shaman focuses attention when listening to a client's problems, formulating a diagnosis, deciding on a treatment plan, giving a massage, concocting an herbal tea, or crafting an amulet.

Ecstasy is the attentional state most closely associated with shamanism due to the work of Eliade (1951/1964). In Eliade's usage, *ecstasy* referred to a shaman's magical journey or flight to heaven as well as trance and mystical contact with divinity. *Ecstasy,* derived from the Greek root *ekstasis* meaning "standing outside of or transcending oneself" (Ecstasy, 2012), is considered an alteration of normative consciousness.

Consciousness

There are many disagreements as to what consciousness is and a widespread recognition about the difficulty operationalizing *consciousness* for research purposes (Krippner, 2005a).

Furthermore, Western definitions of consciousness are “extremely ethnocentric” and “few non-Western cultures would view the matter the way that Western cultures might conceive of it” (Anthropology of Consciousness, 2007). Many cultures lack a word that is equal in meaning to *consciousness.* “Even among Indo-European languages the term does not translate perfectly” (Anthropology of Consciousness).

Altered States

Many researchers describe shamans as entering altered states of consciousness (see C. Pratt, 2007; Walter & Neumann Fridman, 2004; Winkelman, 2010), defined by Kokoszka (2000) as “states in which the content, the form, or the quality of experiences is significantly different from ordinary states of consciousness, and it depicts states which are not symptoms of any mental disorders” (p. 122). Altered states of consciousness are, according to Winkelman (2000), “functionally related to healing and divination activities in that they facilitate the actual occurrence of healing” (p. 144); however, not all altered states of consciousness (ASC) result in healing.

Hunt (1995) explained the relationship between ASCs and healing:

> Essentially all of the hunter-gatherer groups studied by cultural anthropologists have sanctioned methods for inducing transformations of consciousness, which they regard a psychosomatically healing and socially integrative…. These same ‘dream-centered’ societies also recognize negative or malevolent forms of consciousness transformation, often in terms of a ‘soul loss’…. The shaman, as the expert in the induction of positive transformations of consciousness, is also the agent of cure for these negative forms…. (p. 47)

The transformation of consciousness can be measured in the realm of neurological functioning. Winkelman (2000) explained ASC from the perspective of neurobiology:

> ASC is a natural biological response, an "integrative" mode of consciousness involving the synchronization of brain wave patterns across different regions of the brain. I call these ASC conditions integrative because they enhance the merging of processes of lower brain systems (especially the limbic or paleomammalian brain, an "emotional brain") within the frontal cortex. The

> synchronized brain wave patterns enhance awareness of lower brain processes -- often expressed through visions -- heightening awareness of intuitive information and producing a synthesis of emotion and thought. (para. 2)

In contrast to ASC, ordinary, *normative consciousness* or *consensual reality* is what most people would agree on as being real, ordinary, and experienced most of the time by most people; but, this reality is an illusion. Michael Winkelman (2010), in his extensive consideration of shamanism, consciousness, and neurophenomenology, explained:

> The operational environment is the world independent of human knowledge or representation of it.... We do not perceive this external or operational world, reality as it is. Rather we experience symbols in the patterns of neural activity, which depend on the interaction of physiological systems with the cultural programs and epistemic assumptions acquired for processing the external world. (p. 11)

What we experience is assembled from properties of consciousness such as sensation (Classen, 1997), time perception (Munn, 1992) space perception (Pinxton, van Dooren, & Harvey, 1983), emotion (Lutz & White, 1986), cognition (Geertz, 1983), apperception (Hallowell, 1955), memory (Antze & Lambek, 1996), symbolization and meaning (Foster & Botscharow, 1990), pictures and illusion (Segall, Campbell, & Herscovits, 1966), creative imagination (Dissanayake, 1992), indigenous sense of the self (Heelas & Lock, 1981), cultural influence (Turner & Bruner, 1986), dreams (Steward & Lincoln, 1935), visions, and hallucinations (Laughlin, McManus, & d'Aquili, 1990; Winkelman, 2000).

These phenomenological properties are "mediating constructs that include the physical properties of our bodies and the mental and symbolic systems in our brains" (Winkelman, 2010, p. 10), assembled and synthesized into content and transformed into meaning. All of the aforementioned properties are not exclusive to shamans and can be

experienced by artists, art audiences, shamanic communities, and, indeed, most individuals. Some exceptional individuals have innate talents for shifting consciousness, such as hypnotisability, undertake training, develop skills, and master the art of regulating attention. Through a kind of "subjective creativity," artists, shamans, and mystics "often bypass 'normal' consciousness in preference to 'alternative schemata'" at the "nexus between the religious imagination and creativity" (Saniotis, 2009, p. 472).

There are also debates about the use of *altered* to distinguish certain states from normative consciousness. Some scholars prefer the phrase *alternate states of consciousness* (e.g., Heinze, 1991, 1997; P. N. Jones, 2007). Zinberg (1977) introduced the concept *alternate states of consciousness* to make "it clear that different states of consciousness prevail at different times for different reasons and that no one state is considered standard" (p. 1). As Heinze (1997) commented, "To stereotype any alternate state of consciousness as abnormal precludes the beneficial use of such states" because *altered* "suggests that these states represent a deviation from the way consciousness should be" (p. 4). The concept *alternate states of consciousness* does not privilege a single state of consciousness as the basic, primary, "normal" state of consciousness.

Krippner deliberately avoided *altered states of consciousness* in his definition of *shaman.* He believes that some shamans do not alter consciousness during their work and the words *states* and *consciousness* are redundant (see Rock & Krippner, 2011). Instead, Krippner chose *voluntary regulation of attention*.

Despite these compelling arguments, *altered states of consciousness* (ASC) remains in common usage in studies of shamanism, even within a study performed by Krippner (cf. 2000b).

For the National Touring Exhibits program in England, Hiller curated a group exhibit entitled *Dream Machine* (Hiller & Fisher, 2000). The artworks were deliberately chosen and installed to induce altered states of consciousness in the viewer:

> *Dream Machines* takes up the theme of the transformative power of art, presenting works that propose the possibility of shifting the viewer's consciousness to induce reverie, hallucination, or transcendence. International and cross-generational, this book, which functions as the exhibition catalogue, includes daily dream drawings, dream paintings, and real-life "dream machines," as well as photography, sound, video, and installation work that engage with mediumship and trance, intoxication, hypnosis, and out-of-body experience. (Hayward Gallery, 2000)

Trance

> That is why painters live so long.
> While I work I leave my body outside the door,
> the way Moslems take off their shoes before entering the mosque.
>
> Pablo Picasso (Gilot & Lake, 1989, p. 118)

The essential trance meditation technique of shamans, according to Drury (1987), "involves a transfer of consciousness to the visionary world of symbols through an act of willed imagination" (p. 49). In Bali, trance involves:

> An alteration in the person's usual mode of cognition, perception and behavior but without the sense of being taken over by another entity, as in possession trance. Following this definition, the majority of balian employ trance in healing. That is to say, quietistic states of altered consciousness wherein visions, or voices, or simply powerful intuitions are generated, are more commonly employed than the dramatic impersonation of spirits that takes place in possession trance. It also follows from this that nonexpert observers may easily overlook the use of altered consciousness on the part of the practitioner. (Stephen & Suryani, 2000, p. 9)

Shamans heal by manipulating symbolic realities that incorporate mythic processes and "elucidate the diverse subsystems that underlie ordinary consciousness" (Winkelman, 2010, p. 6). These actions – the manipulation of symbols, incorporation of

mythic processes, and elucidation of subsystems underlying ordinary consciousness – could easily be a description of a few stages in an artist's creative process.

Techniques for Regulating Attention

> There must be darkness everywhere except on the canvas,
> so that the painter becomes hypnotized by his own work and
> paints almost as though he were in a trance.
>
> Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), Spanish-born French artist
> (Gilot & Lake, 1989, pp. 116-117)

Shamans regulate attention through deliberate use of *technologies*, the "practical applications of knowledge" or "a manner of accomplishing a task especially using technical processes, methods, or knowledge" (Technology, 2011). A wide range of techniques may be employed either "during normal waking consciousness" or "more typically" shamans enter an alternative state of consciousness by "fasting, undertaking a vision quest, engaging in lucid dreams, or ingesting hallucinogens" (B. Tedlock, 2005, p. 21). Dancing, meditation (Swenson, 2009), sexual abstinence, practicing austerities, dream incubation, and solitude (Winkelman, 2011) are additional techniques for regulating attention. In the Himalayas, shamans used prolonged beating of drums, sustained chanting, or shaking leaves to achieve "an altered state of awareness" (D. Walter, 2003) that often culminates in spirit possession or spirit communication.

Research on art audience experience is generally neglected in favor of studying artists; similarly, there is little research on the experiences and processes of individuals and groups comprising shamanic communities. Descriptions of shamanic communities regulating attention are usually a general list of activities without a deeper exploration of community experience. For example, in Japan, "Ainu shamans... had primary roles in ceremonies that often lasted all night and involved the entire local community, during

which participants danced, played musical instruments, and chanted to produce an altered state of consciousness" (Tanaka, 2003).

Ethnologists performing participant observer fieldwork reported several technologies employed by shamans that resulted in researchers entering alternate states of consciousness, including trance dancing (Katz, 1982), rituals (Lederman, 1988; MacDonald, 1989), use of a shaman's mirror (MacDonald, 1989), masked performance (Webber, Stephens, & Laughlin, 1983), telepathic dreaming (George, 1995), entheogens, dance, and chanting (Chagnon, 1977), perceptions of spiritual entities (Turner, 1996b), and meditation upon complex symbols (Laughlin, McManus, & Webber, 1984). Beyond such lists, our knowledge – about communal and individual alternate states of consciousness triggered by shamanic rituals – is quite limited.

Techniques for regulating attention can be used by nonshamans. For example, to voluntarily contact spirits, any Lakota tribe member may undertake a vision quest aided by fasting and solitude (Feraca, 2001) to regulate attention; however, a Lakota shaman is differentiated by receiving certain types of visions and assuming ownership and control of spirits who appear in visions. Similarly, shamans and their communities may all use entheogens, make art, sing, chant, drum, or dance as ways to shift and focus attention.

Outside of traditional shamanic communities, many methods are used for the sake of altering consciousness. Trance dance is taught in weekend workshops and via Youtube videos. People meditate upon thangkas of Buddha and icons of Mary, participate in rituals of weddings, graduation ceremonies, and bar mitzvahs. With spiritual reverence and awe, people recount taking mind altering drugs and attending the rock music concerts of Led Zeppelin or the Grateful Dead. Ancient Greek armies chanted a paian while

advancing upon the enemy and Occupy Wall Street members chanted inspiring phrases while advancing upon police barricades, government offices, and banks.

Shared experiences of ASC are often enhanced and bounded by event specific music, rhythms, words, movements, visual art, lighting, costumes, sets, foods, fragrances, architecture, astronomical events, and/or times of day or night. The event can become deeply, spiritually meaningful, interconnecting individuals into *communitas,* a strong feeling where assembled individuals bond and feel part of a single, larger entity, even transcending being part of a whole to achieve illumination in extended peak experience.

However, community members generally lack the complete, interrelated, and synthesized constellation of inheritance, calling, talent, training, experience, knowledge, skill, personality traits, and specialized neurological functions, which are required by the shaman's practice and utilized by the shaman in regulating attention.

Music and Sonic Driving

The production of a steady, repetitive rhythm is the most common means by which shamans regulate attention. An extended, monotonous rhythm causes a state of receptivity that permits communication between the shaman and purported spirits (D. Walter, 2003). These results are not solely due to training and conditioning.

Neher (1961) found rhythmic drumming at certain frequencies and speeds affected brain electrical activity. Rhythmic stimulation from drums, shakers, and chants, also known as sonic driving, passes:

> Directly into the reticular activating system (RAS) of the brain stem. The RAS is described as a massive nerve net that coordinates sensory input and motor tone, and alerts the cortex to incoming information. Therefore, it has been suggested that repetitive neuronal firing in the auditory pathways and, in turn, the cerebral cortex, could compete for cognitive awareness, filtering out ordinary stimuli and facilitating entry into ASCs. (Husick, 2010, para. 2)

Sonic driving affects the body's respiratory, circadian, cortical, sympathetic and parasympathetic functioning, attuning the body's natural rhythms to the beats. Trance and possession states can be triggered by music with accelerating tempo, increasing volume, and added instrumental density (Rouget, 1985).

Listening to Western classical music also affects physiological functioning, as measured via "pulse, respiration and external blood pressure.... [and] delays [in] the onset of muscular fatigue..." (Mursell, 1970, p. 6). Music affects how skin conducts electricity through the psychogalvanic reflex (Mursell) and alters levels of nerve growth factor (Angelucci, Ricci, Padua, Sabino, & Tonali, 2007). When critical care patients listened to slow movements in piano sonatas composed by Mozart, they required less sedation, and their concentrations of growth hormone increased, while stress hormones, blood pressure, and heart rate were reduced (Conrad et al., 2007).

In comparison to mechanical performances of music, participants who listened to a "skilled music performance that included the natural fluctuations in timing and sound intensity that musicians use to evoke emotional responses" reported higher emotional responses while "limbic and paralimbic brain areas responded to the expressive dynamics of human music performance" (Chapin, Jantzen, Kelson, Steinberg, & Large, 2010). Moreover, the degree of response was also dependent upon the extent of musical training in the participants.

The researchers concluded, "music performance evokes an emotional response through a form of empathy that is based, at least in part, on the perception of movement and on violations of pulse-based temporal expectancies" (Chapin et al., 2010). Numerous additional studies demonstrated the effect of music on emotions, social bonding,

cognition, stress markers, immune system functioning, pain, cardiovascular health, and neurological functions. There is no question that music can be deliberately employed to regulate attention, altering consciousness in the realms of emotion, cognition, and physiology.

En Theos at Night, Denita Benyshek, 2002, photo montage.

Psychedelics, Entheogens, and Hallucinogens

To fathom Hell or soar angelic,
Just take a pinch of psychedelic.

Humphrey Osmond (G. C. Smith, 1970, p. 795)

Humphrey Osmond invented the term *psychedelic* from the Greek roots *ψυχή,* meaning soul or mind, plus *δηλοῦν*, to make manifest or reveal (Psychedelic, 2007) to refer to psychoactive substances (Smith, 1970). *Psychedelics* (2007) produce "an alteration in the mind, esp. an apparent expansion of consciousness… through greater awareness of the sensations, emotions, and unconscious motivations, often accompanied by hallucinations." Psychedelics also have "curative powers" that help individuals recover from post-traumatic stress disorder, alcoholism, depression, anxiety, cluster headaches, and migraines (Hazen, 2012).

Eugen Bleuler (1857-1939), a Swiss psychiatrist, defined *hallucination* as "perceptions without corresponding stimuli from without" while the 1940 *Psychiatric Dictionary* referred to hallucinations as the "apparent perception of an external object when no such object is present" (as cited in Hallucinogen, 2012). Hallucinations can be symptomatic of psychiatric disorders, caused by chemical substances in psychedelics, or occur during hypnagogic phases, dreams, sensory deprivation, sleep deprivation, hypnosis, or trance (Hallucinogen).

While *vision* most commonly refers to being able to see, a *vision* can also mean the "experience of seeing someone or something in a dream or trance, or as a supernatural apparition" (Vision, 2012). A hallucination is sometimes referred to as a vision when a spiritual interpretation is given to the hallucination.

Entheogens are a subset of psychedelics. "An entheogen, in the strictest sense, is a psychoactive substance used in a religious or shamanic context…. More broadly, the term entheogen is used to refer to such substances when used for their religious or spiritual effects, whether or not in a formal religious or traditional structure (New World

Encyclopedia, 2009, para. 2 & para. 3). This definition of *entheogen* requires a spiritual context or purpose for use. However, the use of an entheogen does not always induce a mystical experience (S. Krippner, personal communication, June 19, 2012).

Alternatively, a second definition of *entheogen* involves the use of a psychedelic substance that produces a spiritual outcome. The source of the word *entheogen* is derived from the Greek *entheos,* meaning "inspired, animate with deity," and *genesis,* meaning "becoming," thus signifying "something that causes the divine to reside within one" (Ruck, Bigwood, Staples, Ott, & Wasson, 1979).

Some shamans use entheogens to regulate attention with the goal of benefiting their communities, either taking the psychoactive substance to regulate attention with the intent of benefitting their communities and/or providing psychoactive substances for the use of community members. In their work as healers or ritual leaders, shamans used *Amanita muscaria,* or fly agaric, mushroom, *Nicotianna rustica* tobacco, peyote, *San Pedro* cactus, so-called mescal beans, and other plant or fungus derived substances with psychedelic properties (Furst, 2004).

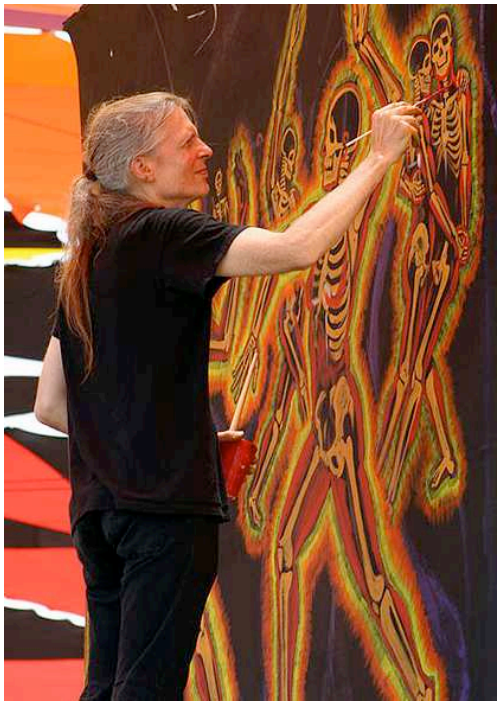
During entheogen use, the roles of shaman and community are differentiated. Amazonian shamans lead their community in ayahuasca rituals that are collective, healing ceremonies integrating "emotion and conscious, preconscious, and unconscious processes" (Fridman Neumann, 2003, p. 40). For shamans in the Amazon, ayahuasca is a way to regulate attention, obtain information, and heal:

> Its uses include identification of illness origin, shamanic journeys to restore soul loss, extraction of pathogenic objects, and shamanic fights with the animated agents of illness. In general, ayahuasca is used as an instrument to gain access to information coming from unseen realms, as well as from the social and natural environment. (Fridman Neumann, p. 40)

For the Huichol, peyote visions inspired the formal, aesthetic properties and symbolic content of their artworks. Peyote visions are often marked by intensely beautiful visual elements of flashing colors, fluid motion, "endlessly repeated geometric patterns such as mandalas and latticework designs, as well as more complex imagery of elements such as flowers, animals, people, and scenery" (Schaefer, 1996, p. 156). When Huichol women see peyote visions,

> They feel it is their duty to record these psychedelic patterns in their weaving and embroidery designs after they have returned home. Failure to do so may result in serious hardships and illness sent by the gods for not having shared these divine communications with their family and community. (Schaefer, p. 157)

Huichol beaded panel, unknown artist(s), Museum of Artes Populares, Mexico City. Alejandro Linares Garcia, photographer.



Alex Grey Painting. 2007, Daniel Salla, photographer.

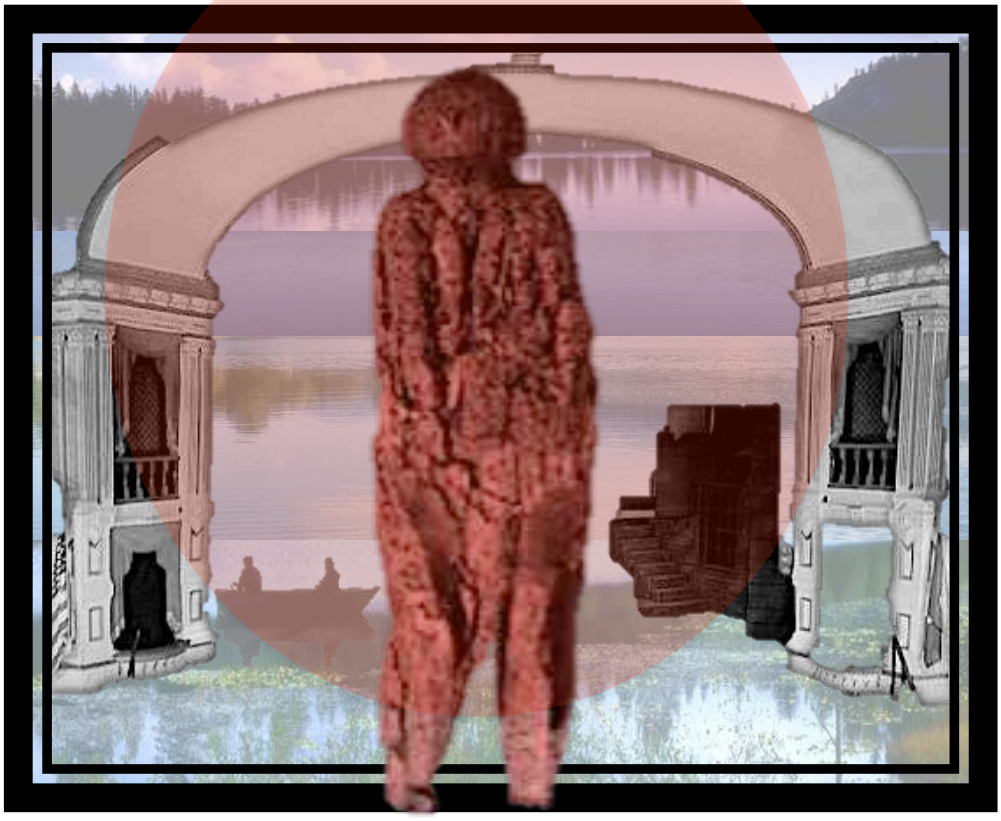
Alex Grey and Anna Halprin. Alex Grey described a psychedelic meditation that transformed how he and his wife made art:

> We did a psychedelic meditation together. For myself, there was a progressive infinitizing of space. I felt like I went out of my body, into what I can only describe as a network of interlocking cells. They were like energy cells within a grid that expanded infinitely. I was a cell, a kind of fountain and drain of energy, connected with all the other fountains and drains in the entire network, in the grid. And the energy moving through us all was love.....
>
> I felt it was a resolution of the "one in many." We're all connected, on some level, and that level seemed more real than anything physical. This table does not seem as real to me as that experience. It was a kind of bedrock reality of the interpenetration of all beings and all things.
>
> We were merged, and yet distinct. Each unit had a job to do, each being was separate, and at the same time was united by its similarity to all other beings and things, because the energy flowing through us was all the same energy. I felt that each resonating little node in the network was conscious of every other node, aware it was interconnected with all the other nodes....

> It was an eternal place, a heaven realm..... I felt that this was integral to the universe, the way it really was. But it was inexplicable, and to try later to portray it as art was a mind-numbing task. (Raine, 1988)

As a research participant, dancer/choreographer Anna Halprin (Halprin & Maletic, 1997) ingested a hallucinogen:

> Yes, I have had a psychedelic experience, only one, and it did get me in touch with a very deep breathing experience in which I was able to sense what the Chinese call the red spot. I was able to start the radiation all through my body, and this relation that set in was so profound, it completely changed my body structure. This happened at the University of California. Somebody was filming it. Afterwards, I felt very different in posture and alignment, and when I started to move I felt very different. But when I saw the film, I didn't even recognize myself. My body went into a very effortless type of alignment, and my movements had no effort. Without getting out of breath I was able to move with so much more strength and richness. I felt so much more alive. Because I was able to direct it towards the discovery of relaxation through breathing, the experience had very illuminating effects. (p. 48)



Illumination Though Red, Denita Benyshek, 2012, photo montage.

Voluntary Regulation of Attention: Chapter Summary

The attention of shamans, shamanic communities, artists, and art audiences appears to be regulated through a series of stages: creating boundaries to contain experience and excluding distractions, focusing concentration, shifting consciousness, crossing thresholds, entering different realms of being, experiences in those realms, returning, again crossing thresholds, arriving within contained space, achieving resolution or integration, going through an opening in the container's boundary to exit, closing the opening, and arriving in normative consciousness.

Art

is for Artists and Audiences,
for Attention regulated
and Absolute Belief,
the invisible fourth wall of the theatre
collapsed,
when disbelief is
dissolved,
riding polarities like a circus acrobat,
balanced
on twin steeds of light and sound,
called
through space through eyes and ears,
welcomed

replicated

in the theatre of mind,

felt

reverberating in every cell,

meaning attuning realms,

inside the frame

the whole body,

on the book's pages

reading

the whole self.

We are the embodiment of art.

Art is the body of we.

Art creates connections. Colors brighten.

Invisible subtleties are revealed.

Exquisite details.

Life lived.

Awareness heightened escapes

zig zag up constructions to

well worn, old upholstery patterns of

day after day after day existence.

(yes,

so Beautiful,

but fading forgotten,

softness not noticed

a couch crying

tears in fabric

unattended tatters).

Raw chaos explodes in the combustion engine, driving

those energies carving the landscape of being

with fire trumpets,

with wind instruments,

with drops of harp strings water plucked

and the fresh blood of meaning flows in Our Art Body veins

even when sticky crimson does not fill the brush or

pen does not release ink into verse,

in those moments

Alive!

but, when art is Not Being

made,
seen,
heard,
read,
worn,
sang,
whistled,
joked, or
baked -

life slowly recedes,

distant, wrapped in an ever thicker layer of mundane reality,

Fog engulfed

Our Art Body

our eyelids close.

Dreary existence, half alive,

routine madness, conventional life.

Take out for dinner,

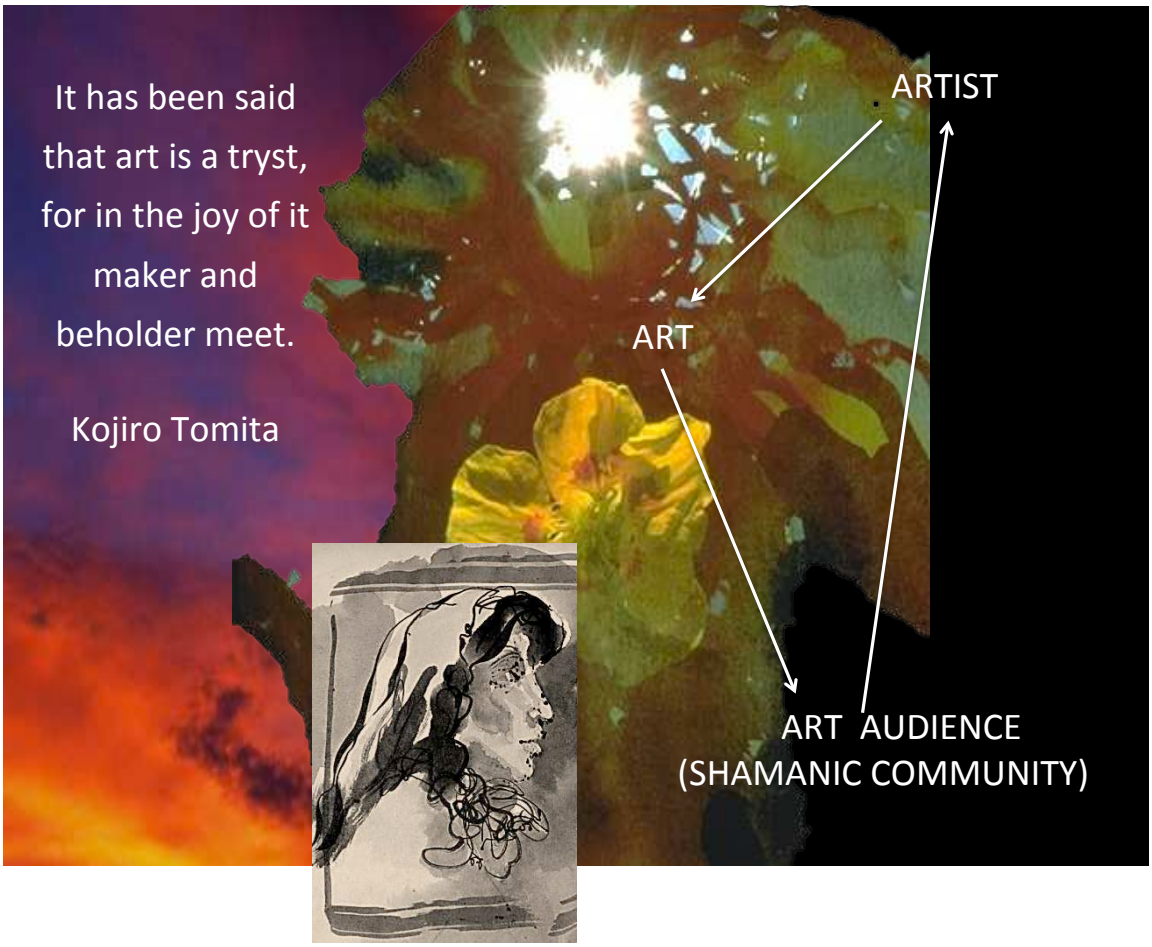
take out the trash.

Please.

In the recent two-volume publication, *Altering Consciousness: Multidisciplinary Perspectives* (Cardeña & Winkelman, 2011), Levy (2011) focused on ASC and modern art. He wrote "a small but significant number of visual artists from the early 19th century to the present" deliberately practiced techniques to regulate their attention and alter their consciousness. Instead of passively waiting for inspiration, these artists "consciously cultivated ASC" (Levy, p. 328). The techniques employed by these artists are the same as, or similar to, techniques employed by shamans, namely dreaming, hypnosis, focusing on entopic phenomena, performing rituals, using hallucinogenic substances, and drumming (Levy). Artists also used divination (Merrill, 2011), spiritism (Hugo, 1888), and games (Brotchie & Gooding, 1995) to alter consciousness.

Based on my experience as an artist and the experiences of artists I know, we also employ common activities (stimulants such as coffee and tobacco, listening to the blues, gardening, horseback riding, reading art theory and poetry, engaging in conversation, extended solitude, falling in love, sexuality, physical engagement with art materials, dietary restrictions such as vegetarianism or reduced caloric intake, social activism, attending museums and visiting galleries, wearing certain clothes to work in art studios, and more) to voluntarily regulate attention.

Chapter 9: Used to Benefit



It is difficult to get the news from poems
yet men die miserably everyday
for lack of what is found there.

William Carlos Williams (1938/1994)

Within the context of a shaman's practice, *used* (Use, 2011) means customarily employed, observed, practiced, engaged in, or put into "practical or effective use." *Benefit* (1989) refers to "help" and "for the advantage of." Thus, information accessed by

a shaman is employed, practiced, and put into practical or effective use to help or provide advantages to a shaman's community or individuals within that community.

In 1557, André Thévet reported that shamans helped their communities with problems. According to Heinze (1997), problems addressed by shamans are psychological, social, or spiritual in nature. Shamans also address physiological and medicinal needs (B. Tedlock, 2005).

Social Needs

Providing for social needs is one of the shaman's responsibilities (Heinze, 1997). Feldman (1992) commented "…all works perform a social function since they are created for an audience…. Artworks may be created because of some personal need, but they still call for a social response" (p. 43). Clearly, artists can serve society and society can be served by art. How does this occur?

In 1817, poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge invented the phrase "suspension of disbelief" to indicate a state of "poetic faith" during which there is "a transfer from our inward nature a human interest and a semblance of truth sufficient to procure for these shadows of imagination that willing suspension of disbelief for the moment, which constitutes poetic faith" (p. 5).

The phrase, suspension of disbelief, is definition through negation. Expressed positively, reader and poem cocreate a state of belief. Ferri (2007) wrote:

> Scholars presume that readers, viewers, or listeners of a creative work must engage in some unique leap into the work itself. The willing suspension of disbelief represents a process of senses (cognitions) and imagination (artistic) in which the reader, viewer, or listener cognitively engaged and experiences the creative work. (p. x)

The engagement occurs at a level of reality where literary events are experienced as if true. Imagery transports the reader into the narrative, resonating in a reader's

capacity for visualization, in which "mental images, enhanced by the artful application of just the right words, produce a more enduring transportation into a story" (Green & Block, 2000, p. 323). To introduce the consideration of social problems remedied by art, I will now tell you another story.

Story of a Summer Flick

After taking my 11-year-old son and his best friend to see the latest Transformer movie, *Revenge of the Fallen,* we discussed: how the movie represented the confused melee of battle; why the particular lead actor was cast and how his "everyman" appearance made it easier for the audience to project themselves into the story; the utter sensory assault of the style that exploded the capacity to comprehend action, subjecting the viewer to shock after shock; that it was not giant robots who achieved the greatest accomplishments but motivated, dedicated humans; and, surprisingly, how we exited feeling greatly empowered, capable, even exalted.

The conversation gave a certain degree of fixed form, a kind of gestalt and closure, to the experience. The warm comradeship, the sunny day, the enthusiastic discussion, the pleasant walk to the car, summer vacation from school - all became part of our art experience.

For several days, I occasionally viewed excerpts of the movie in the theatre of memory. Then, a friend posted a website link, within an online social network, to an insightful review of the movie (Anders, 2009). I read the review and then responded to the post. A dialogue ensued. The door of closure re-opened. While not qualifying as great filmmaking, by conventional standards, the "summer flick" is compelling. The friend will see the movie this weekend. No doubt, the dialogue will then continue.

The friend's contribution will shift the conversation and alter the understanding of the movie while, simultaneously, increasing and deepening our understanding of each other, thus strengthening community ties. Seen over two weeks ago, the movie continues to metaphorically operate as a strange attractor, sustaining disequilibrium, and developing meaning and relationships that could not have been predicted earlier.

There may be a kind of response that is generalized across the entire audience. Then, like fractals, elaborating in similar patterns along different trajectories, there is a unique experience within each individual. Perhaps some works of art act metaphorically as strange attractors in chaotic systems.

> Attractors in general are regions in a space defining a system's behavior where it tends to go and tends to stay. Strange attractors are bounded regions of the space where the system is never in exactly the same place and moving in the same direction twice, where behavior is contained but ever novel. (Schuldberg, 2007, p. 58)

Within Chinese culture, art experience is conceived as the art of savoring, not the perceptive series described by Pepper (1949) or "disjunctive acts of reflection on the meaning of a text, but rather of the 'continuation' of the text in the mind after reading is over, a time in which the significance of the text gradually unfolds" (Owen, 1992, pp. 593-594).

Such unfolding can spread across nations, provoking tectonic shifts in paradigms that can contribute to social change.

Black Beauties in the Social Problem Genre of Literature

> A novel is a mirror walking down a road.
>
> Michael Ondaatje (2010), *The English Patient*

The social problem genre of literature uses co-created states of belief to build empathy towards healing the ills of society.

The novel, *Black Beauty: The Autobiography of a Horse*, by Anna Sewell (1907), displayed publicly the abuse of horses by rich and poor. The story is presented as first person narrative from the main character, the horse named Black Beauty. The author borrowed language from the context of slavery to strengthen her message. She invited readers to sympathetically share Black Beauty's interior life and physical sensations (Hastings, 2004). These literary devices resulted in a more powerful public impact than achieved by contemporaneous tracts on animal rights (Hastings).

Sewell's book led directly to the elimination of the bearing rein, a device that forced the head of a horse up to a "fashionable" level, caused immediate pain, and injured the horse's neck. To date, across the planet, an estimated 50 million copies of *Black Beauty* have been sold (Hankins, 2005) and the message still resonates today. The editor of an online magazine, *West by Northwest,* recalled:

> Everything I ever needed to know I first learned in Black Beauty as a child. Like many working in animal welfare, human welfare and labor rights, peace, green cities, and land use movements, this little book greatly influenced my life…. (Hudson, 2005)

Thus, the influence of *Black Beauty* travelled beyond the subject of animal abuse into other fields, and other times, benefitting animals, people, and planet.

Feldman (1992) commented:

> As a type of personal expression, art is not confined to self-revelation. It can also convey an artist's attitudes about public objects and events. Basic human emotions and situations like love, death, celebration, and illness constantly recur, and we see them in a fresh light because of the personal comment made by an artist. (p. 12)

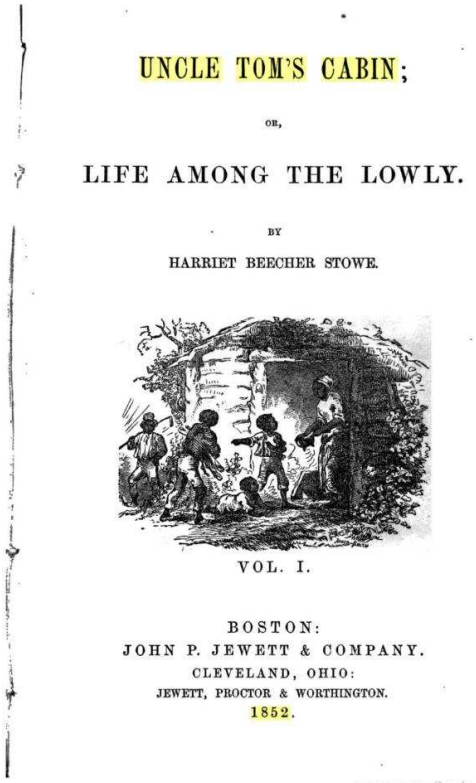
Artists often play the role of shadow bearers in our society. That which society represses, fears, forgets, or secretly desires – artists will express. Artists may go into the shadows and then construct a work of art that embodies the shadow material. When the work of art is wrought and brought out of shadow, whether carried to a reading lamp or into a spotlight onstage, what was previously ignored is presented to the audience. Like traumatized individuals, traumatized societies also need shamanic healing. Bringing neglected knowledge into consciousness and triggering empathy, interwoven with memories of forgotten realities, are shamanic acts that can be performed by art in the service of societal needs.

Another novel in the social problem genre, that strongly influenced the course of history, was *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, authored by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852/1900).

In the preface to the 1900 edition, Walsh noted how *Uncle Tom's Cabin* "easily leads the great books in the world among volumes written for influence…." (p. iv). Prior to the book's publication, abolitionists were considered "social pariahs… fools and fanatics… hooted at, stoned, and otherwise persecuted by the mob" (Walsh, p. viii).

Prior to Stowe's novel, Christianity generally regarded slavery as:

> A condition which God had sanctioned in the past and which He permitted in the present, that to murmur or complain, least of all to make any effort to curtail or suppress the evil, was to rail again Providence, was to take the first step towards Bedlam, was to ostracize yourself from decent society. (Walsh, p. ix)



UNCLE TOM'S CABIN;

OR,

LIFE AMONG THE LOWLY.

BY

HARRIET BEECHER STOWE.

VOL. I.

BOSTON:
JOHN P. JEWETT & COMPANY.
CLEVELAND, OHIO:
JEWETT, PROCTOR & WORTHINGTON.
1852.

Gedigitaliseerd door Google

Harriet Beecher Stowe and the frontispiece to her novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin.*

Despite this social context, a vision appeared to Harriet Beecher Stowe during a church service. The entire scene of the book's conclusion was revealed during communion. "A power higher than herself seemed to have taken possession of her, to direct her, to inspire her" (Walsh, 1900, p. x).

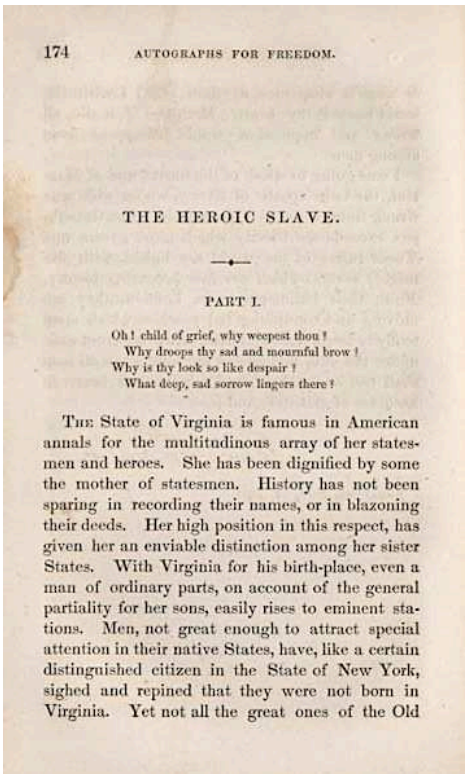
Uncle Tom's Cabin caused an immediate sensation and was embraced eagerly by abolitionists. With sales of 300,000 in the first year, the book exerted an influence

equaled by few other novels in history, helping to solidify both pro- and antislavery sentiment (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2009). Soon, theatres capitalized on the book's popularity with "literally hundreds of derivative melodramas, burlesques, parodies and 'Tom Shows'..." (Kaufman, 2007, p. 20), some of which served to disseminate Stowe's message to an even broader audience. Kaufman described how *Uncle Tom's Cabin* contributed to social processes:

> The cultural heat that was absorbed into the novel, and heightened and generated from it, blasted through the tinderbox of American sectionalism in which also swirled the sparks from other acts and events – the Fugitive Slave Law (1850), the Kansas-Nebraska Act (1854), the Dred Scott case (1856-57), the guerrilla wars of 'Bleeding Kansas' (1856), Harper's Ferry (1859) and the election of Lincoln (1861). (p. 20)

However, *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* along with its author, was vehemently denounced in the South. There, reading or possessing the book became an extremely dangerous enterprise. In response, at least 25 proslavery novels were published prior to the Civil War (Library of Congress, 2007). Perhaps the strong, negative reaction is an example of what Bullough (1957) meant by concordance between a work of art and the spectator. If an artwork presents an unfavorable view of a character or situation, which is too similar to the audience, then the artwork is often rejected. However, rejection is not the only response. There can be a scaffolding response that builds upon the previous work, continuing a dialogue with the topic, and furthering social transformation.

Frederick Douglass read *Uncle Tom's Cabin* and then wrote *The Heroic Slave* (1975/1853) to contradict the stereotypes of African-Americans presented by Stowe. Douglass succeeded in further raising social consciousness regarding slavery and brought the topic into political debates.



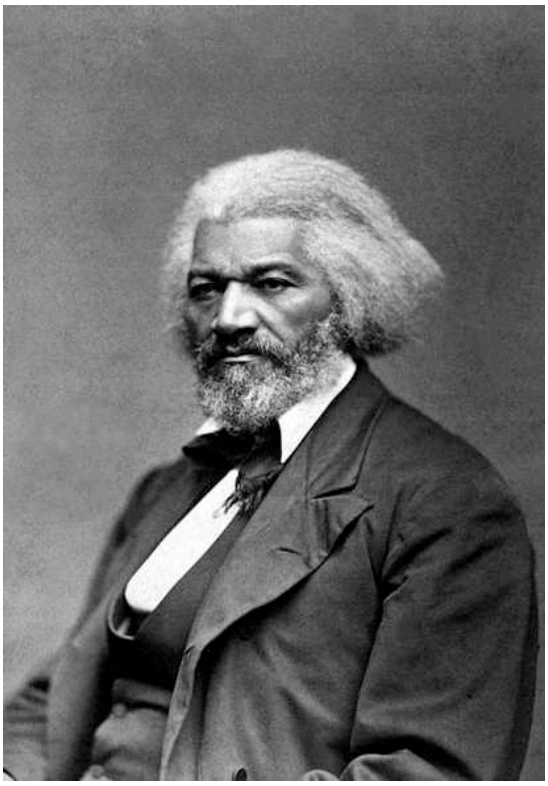
174 AUTOGRAPHS FOR FREEDOM.

THE HEROIC SLAVE.

PART I.

Oh! child of grief, why weepest thou?
Why droops thy sad and mournful brow!
Why is thy look so like despair?
What deep, sad sorrow lingers there?

THE State of Virginia is famous in American annals for the multitudinous array of her statesmen and heroes. She has been dignified by some the mother of statesmen. History has not been sparing in recording their names, or in blazoning their deeds. Her high position in this respect, has given her an enviable distinction among her sister States. With Virginia for his birth-place, even a man of ordinary parts, on account of the general partiality for her sons, easily rises to eminent stations. Men, not great enough to attract special attention in their native States, have, like a certain distinguished citizen in the State of New York, sighed and repined that they were not born in Virginia. Yet not all the great ones of the Old



First page of *The Heroic Slave,* from Griffiths (1853) and Frederick Douglass (c. 1879) National Archives

The emancipation of the slaves in 1862 also resulted in many former slaves learning to read – a skill previously prohibited by law. The new literacy provided access to the books that led to freedom. By 1897, more than 300 books had been authored and published by African-Americans and there were more than 400 newspapers edited and published by African-Americans (Haley, 1897).

After a long journey, guided by African-American authors such as Ralph Ellison (*The Invisible Man,* 1995, winner of the 1953 National Book Award), Lorraine Hansberry (*Raisin in the Sun*, 2004, awarded 1959 New York Drama Critics Circle Award for best play of the year), and Toni Morrison (nine novels including the 1988 Pulitzer Prize winning *Beloved*, 1987) - accompanied the entire distance by millions of readers – another book was published.

Dreams from My Father (Obama, 2004) became number one on the *New York Times* Bestseller List. The book – and the collective, creative power of its readers – influenced many voters in the presidential election. For many readers, the autobiography contributed towards healing the persistent social ill of racial prejudice.

Harriett Beecher Stowe and Frederick Douglass, and the audiences who received, emulated, and challenged them, performed much of the groundwork that prepared the cultural battlefield for the Civil War (Kaufman, 2007). The transformative, healing power of the novels contributed energy and momentum to a social trajectory of change that, 156 years after the emancipation of the slaves, elected the United States of America's first African-American president, Barack Obama.

Healing Splits

> The subjectivization of the universal in art
> brings the universal downward
> on the one hand, while on the other it helps
> raise the individual towards the universal.
>
> Piet Mondrian (1872-1944), Dutch painter of Neo-Plasticism.

Divisions in society occur between neighbors, races, nations, art and technology, high and low culture, sacred and profane, artists and art audiences, and so much more. By attempting to heal splits, unite opposites, and re-member society, shamans and artists provide community service.

Art audience experiences can form and strengthen communities. Among institutionalized elderly women, Wikström, Theorell, and Sandström (1992) found the non-directed use of visual art reproductions stimulated happiness, peacefulness,

creativity, and social activities, providing antidotes to social isolation and existential despair.

To transcend the division between Mexico and the United States, Venezuelan artist Javier Tellez collaborated with the "human cannonball," David Smith. Tellez shot Smith from a cannon over the barricade separating the two countries (Spagat, 2005). Kim Kum Hwa performed trance rituals in Los Angeles to create community harmony after the 1992 riots (Looseleaf, 2002).

Some writers perceive shamans as deconstructionists who blur categories, dissolve boundaries, blend polarities, break taboos, and challenge authority (Hansen, 2001). Shamans also continuously reconstruct, re-member, and reweave the fabric of existence. Shamans raise individuals and societies up developmental planes, beyond polarities, past rebellion, above authoritarian control, arriving at the sacred. Transcendent oneness is not achieved solely through the dissection of deconstruction.

Artist Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, a Native American, perceived her role as "a harbinger, a mediator, and a bridge builder. My art, my life experience and my tribal ties are totally enmeshed. I go from one community with messages to the other, and I try to enlighten people" (Server, Binstock, Connors, Everett, & Hartigan, 1996). Many artists attempt to heal splits in society as well as within individuals, working to reunite what was broken, fragmented, and separated, to sculpt a whole out of parts.

Nam June Paik: Crossing boundaries, integrating disparities. Nam June Paik (1932-2006), born in Korea and later living in the United States, contributed to the development of video as an art form. Filmmaker Wook Steven Heo (2003), also born in Korea and later moving to the United States, recognized Paik's utilization of elements

that crossed “cultural and physical boundaries between art and technology, past and present, East and West, order and chaos” (p. 2). According to Heo, themes of integration and reconciliation of opposites are rooted in South Korean shamanism. Paik’s videos and performances integrated disparate sources such as pop music, indigenous chanting, drums, Allen Ginsberg’s poetry, John Cage’s compositions, and television commercials.

Paik believed in the connection of all cultures through shamanic myth. South Korean shamans recognize three realms of life beyond consensual reality: spirits, spirit animals, and communication with the dead (Heo, 2003). Boundaries in their shamanic cosmos are not rigid and impermeable, with rituals serving to lessen the distance between worlds. An example is Paik’s restoration of life ritual for his deceased friend, Joseph Beuys. The magical power of art created illusions and physically manifested what was invisible. Heo described Paik’s work as “sensory triggering mechanisms to expand consciousness and/or induce shamanic trance states” (p. 8) in the artist and his audience.

Heo sees a parallel between shamanic journeying to different realms and Paik’s appropriation from different cultures. Through artists such as Paik, shamanism is “mutating and migrating to new ground...” (Heo, 2003, p. 7). Heo asserted that shamanistic performance and video artists create “non-everyday space, an inter-space that is situated between different dimensions of reality, where intense and direct encounters and forms of communication occur” (p. 7). Heo’s insights reveal part of the overlapping territory between shamanism and art.

Psychological Needs

Heinze (1991) mentioned how shamanic rituals could provide cathartic release. Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.) discussed a kind of emotional catharsis, or purging, provoked by music:

> But we maintain further that music should be studied, not for the sake of one, but of many benefits, that is to say, with a view to education, purgation... for enjoyment, for relaxation, and for recreation after exertion. It is clear, therefore, that all the modes must be employed by us.... For feelings such as pity and fear, or, again, enthusiasm, exist very strongly in some souls, and have more or less influence over all. Some persons fall into a religious frenzy, whom we see as a result of the sacred melodies – when they have used the melodies that excite the soul to mystic frenzy – restored as though they had found healing and purgation. Those who are influenced by pity or fear, and every emotional nature, must have a like experience, and others in so far as each is susceptible to such emotions, and all are in a manner purged and their souls lightened and delighted. (p. 191)

Expanding on Aristotle's ideas, wherein strong emotions must be purged to so that an individual can regain a sense of well-being and enjoy life, Soviet psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1925) wrote, "Catharsis of the aesthetic response is the transformation of affects, the explosive response which culminates in the discharge of emotions" (p. 215). Vygotsky believed that art could be "a most powerful means for important and appropriate discharges of nervous energy" (p. 215).

Scheff (1979) wrote about powerful social and psychological healing processes that can be triggered by ritual and drama, wherein individual or communal repressed emotions are completely discharged through catharsis. This process is important to counteract the effects of emotional repression, relax body tension, regain "clarity of thought and perception" (Scheff, p. 52), reconnect with others, promote a feeling of cooperation, become "more tolerant of discharge in others," and stop "transmitting the pattern of repression" (Scheff, p. 53).

These cathartic results from ritual and drama require more than purgation of emotions. Nichols and Efran (1985) understood that catharsis is useful in self-discovery but is only a "preliminary step" (p. 46) towards gaining "responsibility for choosing more congruent actions and appropriate social expressions, thereby defining a richer, more satisfying existence" (p. 46).

Catharsis might also be a catalyst for change in beliefs, practices, identity, and goals, possible if insights from newly discovered or recently unearthed knowledge is integrated via what Bohart (1980) referred to as a "working through" (p. 199) of "unfinished business" (p. 197). Individual awareness is not absolute and the work of living and being, discovery and integration, is never finished. As a result, there are many opportunities for art to set up experiences leading to catharsis. Then, individual creative processes, involving awareness, change, and integration, become the responsibility of art audience members.

George Longfish and Molly McGlennen: History, Horror, and Honor

George Longfish, a Native American artist, created *Winter Still Life Landscape, South Dakota, 1983* partly in remembrance of the battle of Wounded Knee. In the acrylic on canvas work, "Old men, women, and children," written twice, becomes the foreground of a textual landscape. The frozen body of Chief Big Foot is juxtaposed with the frozen confection of Eskimo pies. Nearby, the words, "My Lai," refer to the killing of innocents by American soldiers in Viet Nam, broadening the historical context and creating a continuum of time and atrocities reaching from past to present.

The dynamic of catharsis may, in part, explain the exultation expressed by Ojibwe writer and art historian, Molly McGlennen (2004), in response to *Winter Still Life.* McGlennen (2004), found spirit

> within the remembering of a horrific massacre…. Longfish's art draws on a sense of honor that allows truth to be pulled from all directions and the spirit to emerge from within the work in a way that heals the very wound it addresses. (para. 7)

One source of information available to researchers, regarding audience response, exists in the form of art reviews. In the art-audience system, reviewers serve as gatekeepers, selecting which artworks receive more attention and high regard. For audience members, a reviewer can provide unique interpretations and demonstrate how to enter and participate in an art experience. A reviewer can serve as a role model, creating additional layers of artistic communication, through personal transparency and historical contexts, with which the reader may dialogue. A reviewer might also guide readers deeper into an artwork, offering insights, and concluding with integration.

My relationships with Longfish's *Winter Still Life* and McGlennen's review developed in tandem.

What is this relationship?

Longfish offered an alternate view to the frontier hero exploring unknown wilderness. He criticized commercial interests that appropriated Native American names to lend romantic glamour to cars, sports teams, and steak restaurants. Instead, Longfish revealed what is hidden in the long, dark shadow cast by manifest destiny.

As an audience member and researcher, I wondered: Why should we gaze at the image of a frozen chief? Why is it important to know our nation's history? How does this artwork provide for psychological, social, and spiritual needs?

Longfish revealed the ugly truth beneath President Andrew Jackson's (1829) letter addressed to the Creek tribe:

> Your Father [the president's patriarchal reference to himself] has provided a country large enough for all of you, and he advises you to remove to it. There your white brothers will not trouble you; they will have no claim to the land, and you can live upon it, you and all your children, as long as the grass grows or the water runs, in peace and plenty. It will be yours forever. (p. 452)

One year later, President Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act, which forced 70,000 children, women, and men from their homes and resulted in up to 30,000 deaths (Wong, 2007).

I first saw *Winter Still Life Landscape, South Dakota, 1983* (Longfish, n.d.) when I was looking for art by a minority artist, created from an emic, ethnic perspective. I wanted to start balancing the number of creativity studies published in the United States about Caucasian artists and the relative neglect of minority artists. Intent on developing arguments and theories, I did not respond emotionally or intuitively to *Winter Still Life.* Instead, my intellect noted disparate images juxtaposed in ironic comment upon the present. As expressed in the collage language of post-modernism, I recognized the referenced tragedy; however, I did not experience the tragedy.

Edward Bullough: Psychical Distance

Within two dimensional, visual arts, several kinds of distance may be present, including illusory representation of space as well as the temporal distance that exists between an artwork's creation and perception by its audience. Bullough (1957) originated the theory of psychical distance. When psychical distance is created, distance is placed between the perceiver and "such objects as are the sources or vehicles of emotion" (p. 94). Works of art can be source objects.

Bullough (1957) observed that, in art experience, the audience often interprets

"'subjective' emotions" as belonging to the art object. Psychical distance permits "an emotional reaction" to arise, possibly accompanied by revelation, then transformation. The degree of psychical distance varies according to the individual capacities of audience members and differences in art objects. During my initial intellectual analysis of *Winter Still Life,* what Bullough termed "over distancing" resulted in my lack of emotional, personal engagement with the work.

Despite my initial "cold" response to Longfish's work, I looked again and again. I read McGlennen's (2004) essay for the fourth time.

I am writing outdoors, on a glorious day in spring, near a waterfall that sings near the front door of my mountain home. I hear frogs serenading their sweethearts and the unrelenting rush of vehicles hurling down the freeway that bisects this mountain valley. Here, not that long ago, the Snoqualmie tribe hunted deer and elk and made their homes. Then, the valley's temperate rain forests were cleared, dotted by log cabins, and then dissected into dairy farms, cul de sac developments, gated communities, and private Shangri-La's. Only recently has the tribe regained a foothold in the valley – through the construction of an enormous casino.

When I, a European American woman, looked at *Winter Still Life Landscape, South Dakota, 1983*, I did not find spirit. I did not feel healed. I felt racial shame. I knew Native Americans were deliberately infected with small pox, herded in forced marches, murdered ruthlessly, and given treaties to sign that would soon be broken.

The shame spread, hot and burning, through my body. Longfish drew a pall over the day and awareness brought tears to my eyes. Yet, perhaps this was a healing, a

making whole through knowledge and consciousness. As my fingers typed these words, my hands reached out to McGlennen and Longfish. My eyes met their gaze.

I said, “I am sorry. I am so very, very sorry. I will do all that I can.”

Rewrought Memories

My thoughts travelled back in time when I taught in remote, Native American villages in the Alaskan bush. I persuaded elders to fund art scholarships for the talented teens. Then, another memory rises. When I taught at a university in Alaska with a high population of Native students, I pressured the art program director to hire a Native art instructor. I was told, “They’re all drunks.” Nonetheless, I was persistent. One year later, I saw the raven-black hair of Native students and teacher bent over baskets being skillfully woven with traditional methods. Finely constructed, the baskets can be used to transport water without a single drop leaking out.

I think of my service as an art grant juror. Two European American jurists, armed with graduate art degrees, voted against an artist from Japan and an artist from Guatemala. Both artists, highly skilled in the traditional arts of their own cultures, were criticized for their lack of originality, progress, and modernity. The jurists’ prejudice also privileged, to use a concept from post-modern criticism, fine arts over crafts and folk art.

Within the jury panel, I spoke up and addressed the value system used to disqualify the Japanese and Guatemalan artists. To their credit, the opposing jurists listened. Then they asked a Japanese juror, silent throughout the discussion, if they were being racist. The woman simply nodded “yes.” The ethnic artists received grants.

These memories are synthesized with Longfish’s images and McGlennen’s words. “Memories,” wrote Dewey (1958),

> not necessarily conscious but retentions that have been organically incorporated in the very structure of the self, feed present observation. They are the nutriment that gives body to what is seen. As they are rewrought into the matter of the new experience, they give the newly created object expressiveness. (pp. 89-90)

Stephen Pepper: Funding and Fusion

The synthesis of memories is related to philosopher Stephen Pepper's (1949) concepts of funding and fusion.

> Funding…is based on the fact that it takes time to experience a work of art. During that time we have many separate successive perceptions of the work…[which] may be similar, they may have a family resemblance, but they are not identical. However, they interact with each other: early perceptions and strong perceptions dominate weak perceptions. As these perceptions accumulate in memory and in present experience, they modify and enrich each other. (Feldman, 1992, p. 260)

The process of funding, through a "perceptive series" (Pepper, 1949, p. 149) enriches aesthetic experience and makes the activity personally meaningful. This experience is what creates, for the viewer, an "aesthetic object" (Jordan, 1937). The object becomes the "focus of appreciation and critical judgment" (Feldman, 1992, p. 260), set apart from the viewer by psychical distance.

"Closure," noted Feldman (1992), is the "completion of the process of aesthetic perception" (p. 257). Good design leads to good gestalt; that is, the artist structures an artwork so that closure is eventually attained. "That closure, in turn, yields coherence, meaning, and emotional satisfaction" (Feldman, p. 257).

Pepper refers to this state as fusion, a kind of holistic understanding and sense of closure, which integrates previous perceptions, emotions, memories, and thoughts. I think fusion can also occur in steps, in a series of loop de loops, with each subsequent fusion building upon the previous one as the viewer returns to the work of art again and again – and fusion might lead to action.

Catharsis, Commitment, Collapse, and Unity

My encounters with the creative products of Longfish and McGlennen, strengthened my commitment to activism, to speak out and shine my little flashlight into darkness and ignorance.

Suddenly, at this stage in my internal process, I feel another cathartic release. The weight of shame and grief lightens. A small smile forms beneath my tears.

Several days later, I again view *Winter Still Life Landscape, South Dakota, 1983.* Within the picture plane, next to the frozen body of the Chief, the 1971-1973 racial riots in my high school appear, followed by a parade of memories, decades in length, populated by prejudices and persecutions, large and small, immediate and distant, personal and multinational, sobering and heavy, memory upon memory, wave upon wave, crushed together, weighing heavily on my day. Molly McGlennen, where did you find spirit?

McGlennen (2004) wrote of healing received for past tragedies and present realities. In Longfish, McGlennen found honor and spirit. Her needs for psychological, social, and spiritual well-being were healed and restored through a shamanic art experience.

I could never say that I "like" *Winter Still Life,* nor do I find it "beautiful" in the sense of feeling aesthetically pleased. Instead, Longfish and McGlennen heightened my consciousness of social inequality and injustice while serving as a catalyst to action. Although we are looking at the same artwork, the gift received by McGlennen is different than the gift received by me. To a great extent, our responses are no doubt due to differences that may be identified through the same variables used to understand

significant influences on eminent creators, including: genetics, neurological development, sociocultural environment, education, personality, work, and family (Amabile, 1996; Csikszentmihalyi, 1996; Dacey & Lennon, 1998; Findlay & Lumsden, 1998).

Longfish, McGlennen, and I are separated by space and time. Yet, I suddenly recognize myself amidst the community peopled by Longfish's viewers and in McGlennen's readers. Three-dimensional space and linear time has, in this moment, collapsed and disappeared. Unity remains.

Unity and integration are essential components in my sense of health. What other artistic processes contribute to a sense of wholeness and health in the art audience?

Physiological Needs

My altar of adoration:
when the music begins to
decompose,
its elements splitting up –
undividing.

The piano flies off into the
approaching winds,
the singer's voice wheels
around memories of being
alone.

The violin rides off on a brown
mustang.

The neuron cells release (in
ecstasy) endless laughter,

a state of becoming unhinged.

Joseph Divine-Mercy Romero
(a/k/a James Schmidt), 2012.

Positive Affects of Recorded Music on Multiple Body Systems

When listening to favorite music, surgical patients required less anesthesia (Ayoub, Rizk, Yaacoub, Gaal, & Kain, 2005). Listening to recorded music also resulted in: significant reduction in pain, anxiety, depression, and consumption of anti-anxiety medications in hospitalized patients with chronic pain (Guétin et al., 2011); reduced heart rate and blood pressure and improved mood in coronary heart disease patient suffering from anxiety (Bradt, 2009); decreased anxiety related to pressure to excel in gifted students (Cadwallader & Campbell, 2007); positive effects on intelligence, mental health, and immunity (Avanzini et al., 2006); improved fluency, ease of movement, and levels of antibodies, while also decreasing levels of stress hormones in people with Parkinson disease (Enk, 2008).

> We'd expect that different kinds of music might show different physiological and immunological effects. Not only the music itself is important but probably the personal appraisal of the listener will also be important. We did not use relaxing music, but rather exciting music that were joyful dance tunes from different centuries. (R. Gray, 2008, para. 11)

Neurological Entrainment, Synchronization, and Trance

Neher (1961) studied the kind of rhythmic drumming often used by shamans, finding that certain frequencies and speeds affected brain electrical activity. Rhythmic stimulation from drums, shakers, and chants creates sonic driving which passes directly into the reticular activating system (RAS) of the brain stem (C. Pratt, 2007, p. 454). The RAS is described as a "massive nerve net that functions to coordinate sensory input and motor tone," alerting "the cortex to incoming information" (p. 454). Repetitive neuronal firing in the auditory pathways and, in turn, the cerebral cortex, is thought to complete for cognitive awareness. During this process, ordinary stimuli is filtered and entry into ASCs are facilitated (Achterberg, 2002).

Discharge patterns in sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems are constructed by sonic driving. Certain kinds of musical rhythms tune the human body's natural rhythms; respiratory, circadian, and cortical rhythms become synchronized (Sylvan, 2002). As tempo accelerates, volume rises, and instrumentation becomes denser, trance and possession states are triggered (Rouget, 1985) due to the neurological effects of music. Specific opiate receptors in the brain release endorphins when stimulated by music (D. Austin, 2002).

Winkelman (2011) reported that music:

> Promote[s] health and wellness and enhance[s] balance and emotional harmony. Music also exerts a number of influences that produce synchronization – from the physical vibratory effects on the body, through synchronization of brain waves, coordination of emotions, and a common focus on intention in inducing a sense of unity and connectedness.... A general health effect of music involves this entrainment in the brain.... involves the production of synchronized theta wave brain discharges that synchronize the levels of the brain and establish resonant patterns across the body through sound vibrations. (p. 57)

Furthermore, music heals by eliciting "innate biologically-determined emotional states" (Winkelman, 2011, p. 58), promotes catharsis and emotional venting, expresses repressed emotions, which can result in greater insight. As a result, people are enabled to "express more highly developed affective forms" (Winkelman, p. 58).

Music Harms: Counterexamples

Tragically, music has also been used to express some of the lowest affective forms. Music is used as a form of torture in a deliberate attempt to break down the victim. Hard rock music is played at loud volumes, nonstop, sometimes for weeks, to disorient prisoners, create fear, cause sleep deprivation, and break prisoners as their "brain and body functions start to slide" (Worthington, 2008). Such harmful use of music is most definitely not used for the benefit of the victim-listener and cannot qualify as shamanism.

Research on creativity refers to "gatekeepers" (Moran, 2010), meaning individuals or institutions that determine which art will be promoted and made available to audiences through publications, exhibits, and performances. In this way, the torturers served as dark gatekeepers, selecting which music would be loudly blared in the prisons as an instrument of torture.

Another horrific example of how music can be used contrary to the musician's original intent, were the idiosyncratic interpretations of the Beatles *White Album* by psychotic killer Charles Manson. He was sure that the album's lyrics were coded messages about revolution, how people would find the returned Christ in the form of Manson, and instructions to the use of forks and knives on the murder victims (Bugliosi & Gentry, 1974/1994).

Spiritual Needs

> Painting is nothing but the art of expressing the invisible by the visible.
>
> Eugene Fromentin (Hapgood, 1900, p. 279).

Writing about trauma, Hartman and Zimberoff (2006), explained:

> The more overwhelming the assault, the more essential and closer to the core is that aspect that must be sacrificed. Inner resources such as innocence, trust, spontaneity, courage, and self-esteem were lost, stolen, or abandoned in those early traumatic moments, leaving an immense empty space. The psychic energy cast off through dissociation and splitting, the sacrificed aspects of self, do not simply disappear into thin air, but rather continues in split off form as a primitively organized alternative self. Retrieving these inner resources in age regression to those traumatic events reunites the sacrificial alternative self with the immanent embodied person, strengthening the fabric of the soul's energetic field.
>
> What we are proposing here is a profound level of splitting in that what is split is neither consciousness nor ego nor self, but rather one's essential spiritual identity, what we are calling one's soul. (p. 3)

Soul Retrieval

Soul retrieval is one of the shaman's tasks (Ingerman, 2006; Sidky, 2008). Despite conflicting definitions, there was a general agreement that, ideally, the soul should maintain balance and avoid extremes (Lorenz, 2009).

Many cultures retain a sense of intact, healthy souls, which are capable of optimal functioning when the soul has not suffered from damage, fragmentation, loss, sickness, absence, curse, or theft. Souls are vulnerable, potentially lost during sleep, stolen by spirits, or damaged by trauma (Sumegi, 2008).

These soul injuries may be sufficiently severe as to qualify, in our culture's diagnostic vocabulary, as trauma.

Embodied trauma may manifest as amnesia, loss of consciousness, feeling disembodied, somatic symptoms, hyperarousal, and not feeling the body or emotions (Rothschild, 2000). D. Austin (2002) asked:

> How does one lose a self? It can be sacrificed at birth to fill up an empty parent. It can be shattered into fragments from unspeakable terrors like abuse, neglect and emotional and/or physical abandonment. It can become numb, deadened to life as the only way to exist in an unsafe environment. Or essential parts of the self can be hidden away because when they first came forth they were not welcomed, seen, understood and valued, but were judged, shamed and rejected for being too different, too needy, too much. Sometimes, the authentic self retreats into an inner sanctum because it was envied and even hated for the bright light of potentiality it possessed. (p. 231)

Van de Kemp (2000) noted that descriptions of soul sickness can be found "throughout history and across cultures," concluding with the assertion that "A soul-sensitive psychology can also heal such forms of soul pathology as the depersonalized, disembodied self…and folk illnesses of soul loss…." (p. 336).

Soul retrieval can be an effective treatment for traumatic dissociation. Soul loss injures a person's essence, manifesting as despair, loss of meaning and severed

connection. Winkelman (2002) wrote, “Soul loss occurs from trauma that causes an aspect of one’s self to dissociate, making reintegration of these disassociated aspects of self central to healing” (p. 9).

One way that art benefits the audience is through soul retrieval. “We come to painting, to poetry, to the stage, hoping to revive the soul,” wrote Hyde (1983, p. 59). How does art revive soul and is this action related to shamanism? Whether viewing, listening, or reading, art can transport the audience to another realm where realities of the deepest levels of soul may be viewed. The view may also encompass collective images and archetypal patterns presented symbolically, providing access to an archaic unconscious realm that continually influences our daily lives (Jung, 1959/1990, 1974, 1988a).

I wrote the following poem in response to the challenges facing a friend and a family member.

Elemental Being

I.

In the throne room,
where you strip away sartorial roles,
naked amidst
bound, shattered, engulfing, crowds of memories,
twisted wrecks of sensations,
ragged colors,
broken shards of disappointment,
jagged fragments of metropolis,
thrown into the crucible of breath,
swirling, stirred by the bone of discontent,
melting into now,
poured into an alembric of light.

II.

The opened container pours forth your liquid heart,
formed into gold bars of words,
stacks upon stacks of phrases,
rows upon rows of stanzas,
in the vast vault of poetry.

The accumulated wealth,
spoils of war forged into armor,
deflecting blows and winning battles
raging long into the night
on the field of white linen
now rumpled and torn.

III.

I walk down two flights of stairs
past the tall window framing fir trees,
into my kitchen.

Pouring juice, I see the tiny son floating
in the warmth of his first home,
then walls struck by the father's lightening,
walls shaking from the rage of father thunder,
soft walls of mother struck and shaken.

The little boy swims in womanly fear,
born into life on a river of sorrow,
cradled in her boat of hope.

How do I tell you this truth?

How do you comfort what flows in your veins
from too many meals cooked in tears?
Where is the doctor who can bleed away this tale,
told again and again and again,
in the multitude of boats
jamming the river that stretches from horizon to horizon?

IV.

There is a white room
illuminated by a slanting beam of glowing light
through a single, large window.
The bed,
tucked in smooth white linen,
is empty.
The simple wooden chair
sits in the pool of light
facing the window.
The room and the chair and the window and the light
all await you.

If you enter,
if you sit on the chair and
raise your face to the light,
hear only your breath,
feel the pure air flow into you,
becoming you,
crowned with myrtle,
Prince of Pure Air.

V.

I gaze at your portrait painted of fire and air –
now I understand
why you seek
cold, rain drenched mountains carved of granite,
deep, dark mud,
water and earth.

VI. Afterwords.

I met that boy
after he crawled forth
from the antediluvian sea of sorrows
that swallowed seven hundred generations.
Yes, I remember him
out stretched on the warm beach sand,
golden in the light,
golden wings of the eagle in flight.

Denita Benyshek, April 8, 2011

Martha Graham: The Gift of Grief

Describing the physiological effects of trauma, Swallow (2002) wrote, "Non-declarative or implicit memory may not be felt at conscious level, is not easily forgotten or erased and may be reactivated by an appropriate stimulus after many years" (p. 48). Art offers an opportunity to re-experience trauma within a beautiful and bounded container. D. Austin (2002) noted that "parts of the self can also be projected onto the voice, the music and the musical instruments" (p. 233); thus providing a chance to dialogue with self. Potentially, this process offers an opportunity for members of the art audience to achieve greater integration.

Martha Graham (Brockway, 1998) told this tale about her dance, *Lamentation*:

One of the first times I did it was in Brooklyn.

A lady came back to me afterwards

and

looked at me.

She was very white-faced

and

she'd obviously been

crying

and

she said

"You'll never know what you have done for me tonight,

thank you,"

and

left.

I asked about her later.

Seems

she had

seen

her

child,

her 9 year old son,

killed

in front of her

by a truck.

They'd

made

every effort to make her cry and

she

was

not

able

to

cry.

But, when she saw Lamentation, she said

she felt
that grief was
honorable
and
that it was
universal
and that she need

not be ashamed of
crying

for her son.

That is a very deep story in my life.

As Thomas Moore (2000) understood, "a portion of the suffering in depression comes from our inability to give it language and imagery. It feels vague and therefore without meaning" (p. 33). The process of healing from trauma:

> Involves reinhabiting the body.... the dissociative defenses that initially protect the psyche from annihilation sever the connection between the body, mind and spirit. Embodiment requires the courage to remember and experience the sensations and feelings that were overwhelming and intolerable because no-one helped make sense and digest the intense effects. (D. Austin, 2002, pp. 234-235)

But, art can help us remember, provide opportunities to experience repressed sensations and emotions, gain understanding, and find meaning in a form that is beautiful and bounded. According to Marcel Detienne (1996), a specialist in the history of ancient Greece, poets are masters of shamanic remembering bringing into consciousness hidden personal secrets for our personal benefit.

Martha Graham's dance, *Lamentation,* provided a means for the traumatized mother to experience her grief, stimulated cathartic release, brought honor to the mother, and forged a personal connection with the choreographer. Further, through the dance and her grief, the mother realized that her experience was universal, greater than the details of her personal life, that she was part of something larger. The partnership of *Lamentation* and the mother's grief carried the mother into a spiritual realm of understanding.

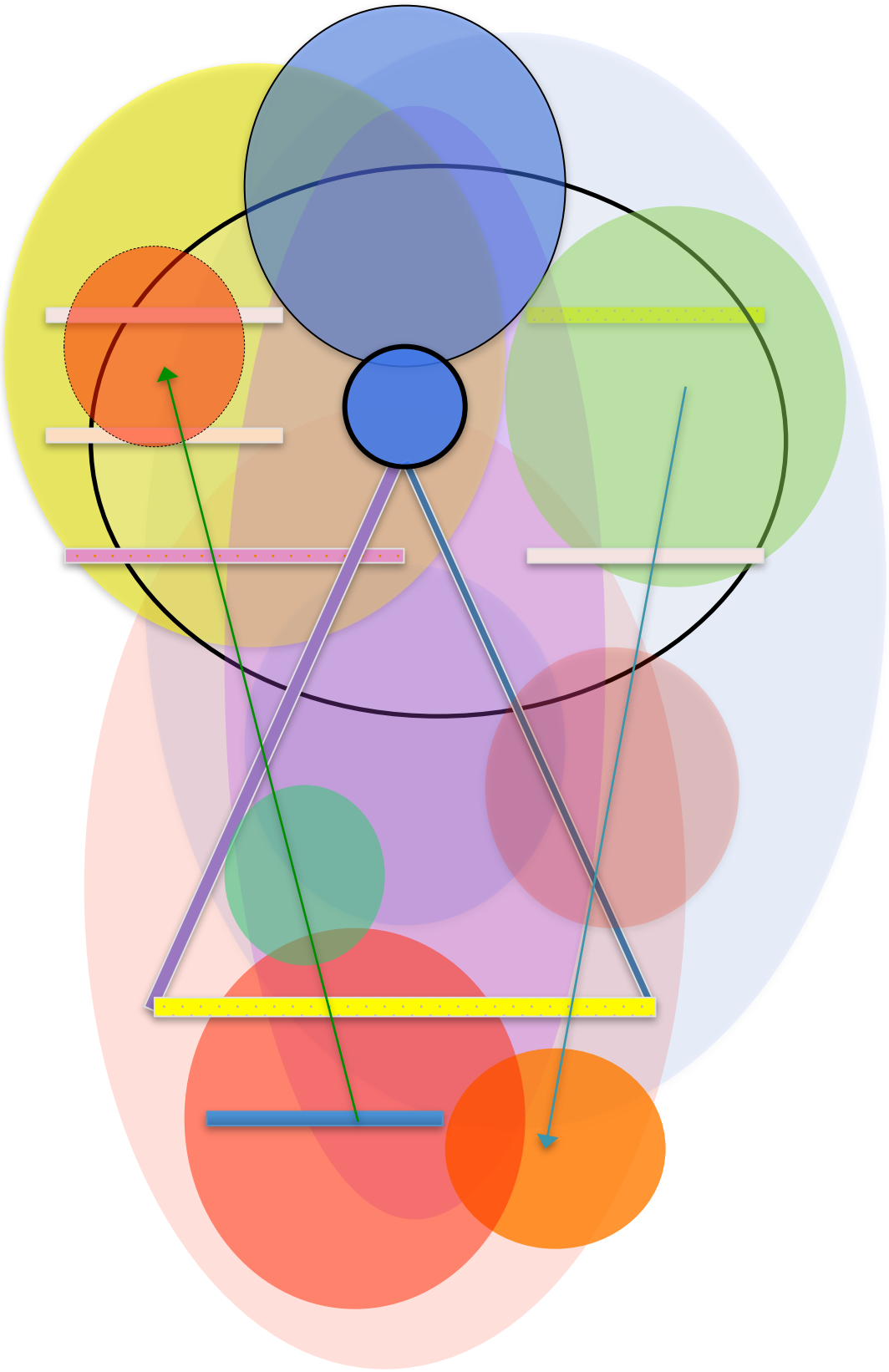
Hyde (1983) observed:

> The spirit of an artist's gifts can wake our own. The work appeals, as Joseph Conrad says, to a part of our being which is itself a gift and not an acquisition.... Our sense of harmony can hear the harmonies that Mozart heard. We may not have the power to profess our gifts as the artist does, and yet we come to recognize, and in a sense receive, the endowments of our being through the agency of his creation. We feel fortunate, even redeemed.... A gift revives the soul. (p. xii)

Used to Benefit: Chapter Summary

The practices of shamans and the creative products of many contemporary artists can provide social, psychological, physiological, and spirit benefits to communities and individuals. However, successful receipt of benefits depends upon the skills, traits, and qualities of individual community members and upon the social and spiritual contexts, beliefs, and practices of the community.

Of all the construct groups defining *shaman,* the construct *used to benefit* is most clearly fulfilled by the majority of contemporary artists considered in this study.



Chapter 10: Results, Recommendations, and Conclusions

Do properties of some contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman*?

To answer this question, this study developed, operationalized, and validated a definition of *shaman* used to make systematic comparisons with cross-disciplinary data including studies on artists from traditional shamanic societies and nontraditional societies, data from creativity studies, previously difficult to access data, and archival data collected from numerous shamanic cultures. This research process provided an affirmative answer to the research question.

Yes, a small subset of contemporary artists collectively fulfilled *all* necessary constructs defining *shaman* within the strictly bounded "Classical Category Shaman," wherein all members have properties fulfilling the defining constructs of *shaman.* This subset of contemporary artists representing prototypical shamanic artists consisted of Norval Morrisseau, Kum Kum Hwa, Pablo Amaringo, and Jóska Soós. They were all members of traditional shamanic societies.

These same shamanic artists are also the central members in the "Fuzzy Set Shaman" because the shamanic artists have all constructs defining *shaman.*

A somewhat larger subset comprised of shamanistic or shamanlike artists was found to fulfill at least some, but not necessarily all, defining constructs of *shaman.* Shamanistic or shamanlike artists do not have all defining constructs of *shaman* and, therefore, these artists cannot be members of the "Classical Category Shaman." However, within the "Fuzzy Set Shaman," these shamanistic or shamanlike artists represent noncentral members. Within the "Fuzzy Set Shaman," central members with all defining

constructs of *shaman* have a family resemblance with noncentral members who have some, but not all, constructs defining shaman.

Key Findings

Differences in Social Support and Training

There appear to be somewhat different paths of development for artists and shamans in that different forms of social recognition, support, and training are available to shamans and shamanic artists from traditional shamanic cultures that are not readily available to most contemporary artists.

Implicit Social Designation?

The operationalized definition of *shaman* requires social designation as a shaman. Must this designation be given explicitly? If an art audience member does not know what a shaman is, then that individual cannot bestow the title shaman on an artist. Therefore, explicit social designation of shamans is dependent upon a society's established shamanic beliefs and not wholly based on shamanic or shamanistic practices.

Art audiences receive psychological, social, physiological, and/or spiritual benefits from some works of art. If these creative art audience processes are considered adequately similar to some processes engaged in by traditional shamanic clients or audience-participants in shamanic rituals, then some art audiences, as groups and as individuals, may have family resemblances to shamanic communities.

Art audiences, or individual members of the art audience, may rely on the abilities and spiritual practices of certain artists who are able to regulate their own attention for the purposes of accessing information, which is then communicated to the audience through the understood form of art.

If this art audience or its individual members then receive social, psychological, physiological, and/or spiritual benefits from the creative work of these artists, does this kind of artist-audience relationship provide an indirect, tacit kind of social designation of shaman to such artists? If yes, then the subset of artists who can be considered shamans is considerably larger.

Conceivably, the art audience can receive benefits from art even if the artist is not called shaman. As Shakespeare's (1871) character Juliet commented:

> What's in a name? That which we call a rose
> By any other name would smell as sweet;
> So Romeo would, were he not Romeo call'd,
> Retain that dear perfection which he owes
> Without that title.

What's in a name? That which we call a shaman by any other name would be a spiritual practitioner obtaining information in ways unavailable to the community through voluntary regulation of attention for the purpose of benefitting a community and its members. Without having the title *shaman* bestowed upon them, many contemporary artists can still fulfill all other defining constructs of *shaman* and their art audience communities can enjoy the sweet scent of art – without that title *shaman*.

But, if art audience members do not understand what a shaman is and if they do not believe in spirits or participate in other elements of a shamanic cosmology, can art audiences and their individual members fully benefit from shamanic or shamanistic art?

Purpose: The Fifth "P" of Creativity?

Moreover, the *intent to provide benefits,* as seen in a subset of shamanlike contemporary artists, appears to be a key finding of this study. In addition to the four "P's" of creativity, that is, person, process, product, and environmental press, *intent* may

be a fifth "P" as evident in an artist's *purpose* for creating and presenting art to provide social, physiological, and/or spiritual benefits to the audience.

Brief Review

I formulated the research question after a series of personally meaningful events led me to the topic of shamanism. During visions provoked by guided imagery and monotonous drumming, I began recognizing similarities between shamanism and the artistic creative process.

Awareness of the relationship between artists and shamans is not new. In the myths of the Buryat, a Mongolian people, the first shaman was also the first artist. In the Western imagination, early explorers associated shamans with artists. According to the archaeologist Qu Feng (personal communication, May 10, 2012), many contemporary Chinese recognize that shamans are highly creative and that shamans and artists are found clustered in the same families.

Restatement of Problems

While researchers in many disciplines identified similarities between artists and shamans, a critical review of the literature revealed multiple methodological weaknesses. I became aware of the need for a study founded on detailed descriptions and explicit theoretical methods supporting a systematic comparison of contemporary artists to shamans, based on a cross-culturally validated and operationalized definition of *shaman,* using archival data, cross-disciplinary data, and heretofore underutilized data from creativity studies. I believed that my experience as an artist, integrated with methods from arts-based inquiry, would further enrich the study and provide you, my reader, with alternate ways of knowing.

In this dissertation, contemporary artists were compared to constructs in the definition *shaman:* A shaman is a socially designated spiritual practitioner who obtains information in ways not available to the shaman's community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention which is used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members.

Each construct was defined and then operationalized, using examples from different individual traditional shamans, from various shamanic societies. Constructs and subconstructs were compared to properties of contemporary artists. Comparisons also considered data regarding creative persons, processes, products, and environmental press.

Overview of Concluding Chapter

Typically, a dialogue with the research literature occurs in the final chapters of a dissertation. However, extensive discussions occurred in previous chapters containing the historical overview and comparisons between contemporary artists and defining constructs of *shaman.* Because dialogues with the research literature are presented elsewhere in this dissertation, this concluding chapter presents a summary of results for each construct group that operationalized *shaman,* representing prototypical/central examples of shamanic artists as related to noncentral examples of shamanlike artists, and discussing validation, generalization, future research, limitations and delimitations, and recommendations for arts-engaged populations.

The concluding section reiterates how properties of some contemporary artists do fulfill all necessary constructs defining *shaman* while properties of other artists indicate a family resemblance to *shaman.*

Finally, I express my commitment to utilizing multiple means of sharing the results of this study with individuals, communities, and institutions that might benefit from enhanced understanding that could develop their engagement with shamanic arts.

Descriptive Summary of Results

Following are summaries of results for comparisons of contemporary artists to shamans. The summary is organized according to construct groups from the operationalized definition of *shaman.*

Social Designation

Traditional social designation of shamans occurs in a series of steps that can begin at birth, continue through childhood, and extend into adulthood.

Shamanic societies identified future shamans based on membership in shamanic families, signs at birth, talents, personality traits, purported spirit possession and spirit communication, shamanic illness, and/or certain themes or symbols in dreams, visions, or hallucinations. While most contemporary artists do not come from shamanic families or shamanic societies, some of the socially recognized signs of future shamans were found in some artists.

Shamanic illness. Although shamanic illness is understood as another form of calling to shamanism, this study did not find clear examples of illness indicating a calling to shamanism in artists – unless the artists were members of shamanic communities. Physical sickness, mental illness, contact with purported spirits, or accidental injury might precede, even somehow provoke, artistic creativity; yet, without participation in a shamanic community, these afflictions and experiences were not interpreted as calling to shamanism. Nonetheless, illnesses and injuries of some shamans and some artists seemed

to contribute to processes that access information and lead to knowledge not generally available to members of their communities.

Prerequisites. Some shamanic societies establish prerequisites for becoming a shaman, generally requiring mastery of early adult developmental challenges and a readiness to enter the generative developmental stage. These requirements do not extend to artists in traditional or modern societies; nonetheless, artists who demonstrated shamanlike intent to benefit others may have entered or passed through the generative developmental stage.

Calling. Before becoming a shaman, a candidate must accept the calling. Many societies believe that rejecting a calling to shamanism results in unending suffering for the candidate and the candidate's family; such suffering can only be alleviated by the candidate becoming a shaman. Similarly, some artists also spoke of suffering resulting from not honoring a calling to become an artist and make art. But, the calling to become a shaman and the calling to become an artist only indicates a similarity in terms of receiving a calling to a specific vocation, which could also be experienced, for example, by priests, doctors, or teachers. Perhaps some artists experience a calling to practice a kind of art that is specifically shamanic in nature, but this determination was beyond the scope of this study.

Apprenticeship and training. If a member of a traditional shamanic society successfully completes a shamanic apprenticeship and undergoes initiation, then the practicing shaman will be socially designated through a culturally specific title indicating the role of shaman.

Both shamans and contemporary artists usually undergo formal training; however, the subject matter, skills, context, and purpose of shamanic training and art education generally differs with the exception of artists from shamanic communities who participated in traditional shamanic apprenticeships.

Stages of the creative process that involve positive disintegration and reintegration appear to be metaphorically somewhat similar to dismemberment, remembering, and rebirth stages in shamanic initiation. The purposes of undergoing positive disintegration and shamanic initiation differ in that shamanic initiation leads to beneficial community service, while the disintegration/reintegration processes of artists can be undertaken solely for personal reasons.

Receipt of title. In traditional shamanic societies, there are specific common nouns that denote different shamanic roles and ranks of shamans. More rarely, someone might self-designate as a shaman, then be recognized by society as having diminished abilities compared to socially designated shamans. Occasionally, a contemporary artist also self-designates as a shaman. In addition, some contemporary artists are called shamans in pop culture publications, but the title is rarely given with a full understanding of what shamanism involves.

Artists, who were members of traditional shamanic communities and who also received the title shaman through traditional methods, most thoroughly fulfilled multiple abstract and concrete levels of social designation as shamans. Nontraditional contemporary artists demonstrated various kinds of social designation in partial, fragmentary ways.

Abstract and concrete categories of subconstructs. Within the construct group *social designation,* there are subconstructs such as calling, apprenticeship, initiation, and bestowal of title. Each subconstruct is abstract in nature, with signs of calling evident in abstract categories such as inheritance, physical abnormalities, talents, traits, etc. In general, as the categories become more concrete and specific to certain societies, there are fewer contemporary artists who fulfill these categories. For example, few artists are instructed in the use of medicinal herbs or are required to eat a restricted diet for the duration of their training. Yet, such practices are not required of all shamanic apprentices cross-culturally. Therefore, the absence of specific concrete actions or signs did not prevent artists from fulfilling construct groups at abstract levels.

Spiritual Practitioner

The spiritual practices of most shamans are founded within cosmological beliefs involving spirits. Some shamans reported receiving indications of their future vocations from spirits, through dreams, visions, or possession. Similarly, some contemporary artists also reported contacts with spirits and some of these experiences were interpreted as a calling to become an artist or to make certain kinds of art. In the data considered, reports of spirit communications guiding artists to become shamans were not found.

A shamanic apprentice might learn how to access, control, and interpret encounters with purported spirits. Data reviewed found statements from contemporary artists who recognized the importance of learning how to manage and control forces or powers associated with creativity, whether arising internally or confronted externally. For these individuals, the creative process was seen to provide needed structure to experiences that might be overwhelming.

A consideration of 17 contemporary artists found a variety of spiritual practices involving beliefs in the reality of spirits as supernatural beings or, alternatively, practices referencing spirituality engaging that which is essential, immaterial, awe inspiring, or universal. These artists practiced spirituality through combinations of inspiration, mysticism, rituals, occult practices such as divination and mediumship, or entry into dimensions conceptualized as the unconscious, collective unconscious, myths, archetypes, imagination, and/or divinity.

Individual shamans reported receiving instruction from spirits in dreams and visions. Some contemporary artists, who were not members of traditional shamanic societies, also reported receiving instruction from spirits.

Spiritual emergence. Unbalanced, destabilized, mildly pathological personality states can be catalysts for change in many categories of individuals. In many shamans and some artists, destabilized states of being can lead to a shift in attention, entry into liminal states and imaginal reality, use of autonomous imagination, productive regression in service of ego, and unbounded mystical experiences, providing many ways to obtain information.

In some shamans and some contemporary artists, what seems to be mental or emotional imbalance can also catalyze spiritual emergencies or transpersonal crises, resulting in superior functioning and even, at times, achievement of an ongoing, heightened spiritual state of being in some shamans and some contemporary artists. When these practitioners undergo spiritual emergence, their work then provides their communities with access to spirituality, divinity, mysticism, and other transpersonal

realms. Of course, temporarily or permanently elevated spiritual states are not limited to shamans or artists

Obtaining Information

Neurology. Neurological processes are thought to provide shamans with ways to access information. Processes considered included dopaminergic function, brain waves, and brain synchronization. The shamanic practices of dancing, drumming, and chanting all raise dopamine levels, which enhances divergent thinking – a cognitive process considered by many to be an indication of creativity. In general populations, more dopamine D2 receptors result in higher levels of dopamine, which in turn lowers latent inhibition and this results in an enhanced flow of numerous associations and ideas.

Without high functioning, fewer dopamine D2 receptors are also associated with schizophrenia, psychosis, and bipolar disorder. This complex of interrelated phenomena may *partly* explain the historical associations between mental illness and shamans, artists, geniuses, and creativity.

Personality. There are few formal studies on the personalities of shamans. Studies considered identified the following personality traits in shamans also found in artists and/or creative individuals: comfort with ambiguity, androgyny, divergent thinking, field independence, flexibility, positive disintegration, primitive mental processes, resilience, and stimulus freedom. Conceivably, these personality traits contribute to processes that access information and individuals who are low in these traits would not be able to access the same kinds of information in the same ways. There are many additional personality traits associated with artists and creativity, which could be

inferred from reports about shamans or the self-reports of shamans, but this degree of analysis was beyond the scope of this study.

Talents and personality traits held in common by many shamans and subsets of contemporary artists included musicality, purported psi abilities, reports of paranormal experiences, transliminality, fantasy proneness, tolerance of ambiguity, androgyny, divergent thinking, field independence, flexibility, capacity for multiple foci, preference for solitude, ownership of cultural capital, stimulus freedom, and flexible, shifting boundaries. In addition, data considered showed shamans utilizing processes also used by creative individuals such as positive disintegration and primitive mental processes.

Yet, many personality or cognitive traits associated with creativity, such as adaptability, analytical thinking, cognitive mobility, curiosity, ability to delay gratification, imagination, less defensiveness, playfulness, preference for disorder, and willingness to take risks, were not found explicitly mentioned in descriptions of shamans. Many of these traits can be inferred from descriptions of individual shamans, but psychological studies that formally tested shamans did not also assess traits associated with creativity. While shamans are generally assumed to be creative, there is a lack of formal research in this area.

Purported paranormal experiences and psi abilities. Purported paranormal experiences and reported psi talents are credited by some shamans and a subset of artists as providing access to information. These kinds of experiences and talents are not exclusive to shamans or artists. However, shamans deliberately utilize their purported psi abilities as part of voluntarily controlling attention, during shamanic journeys or divination, and with the intent of providing benefits to others. Some contemporary artists

also use occult practices and practice divination to access information, although the intent to benefit others is not always present.

While some etic researchers questioned the reality testing of shamans and artists who reported paranormal experiences, spirit communications, and psi talents, even at times viewing these experiences as symptoms of psychosis, shamanic societies accept the reality of these experiences and provide support for developing these socially valued talents.

Mental health, mental illness, and moderating factors. The multidirectional, dynamic relationships between mental health, mental illness, shamans, artists, and creativity are complex. Shamanic societies distinguish between mental illness that indicates a calling to shamanism and mental illness that does not. Social supports are provided to individuals afflicted with shamanic illness, resulting in respect instead of stigma, guidance in obtaining control and productive use of the symptoms, methods for interpreting content of hallucinations/visions within shamanic cosmological beliefs, application of gained knowledge towards benefitting others, and a specialized social role if initiation is completed successfully. It is interesting to note that one study found practicing shamans continued to have symptoms of psychosis while also having superior mental health and excellent functioning.

These forms of social support may partly explain why traditional, indigenous societies have significantly higher success rates treating schizophrenia (see Vaughn, 2010; Watters, 2010) and these social supports are not generally available to Western, nontraditional contemporary artists with symptoms of mental illness.

At this time, several rigorous studies found strong associations between creativity and mild or subclinical symptoms of bipolar and schizophrenic spectrum disorders, first-degree relatives with bipolar disorder, or better functioning states. Comparable research has not been performed with populations of shamans.

When symptoms of mental illness are also accompanied by moderating factors, many of which are held in common by shamans, artists, and highly creative individuals, then these individuals are less likely to qualify for psychopathological diagnoses and are more likely to utilize symptoms or processes in productive, even beneficial, ways.

Unavailable Ways

Within traditional shamanic societies, shamans receive information in ways that are not generally accessible to non-shamans. Non-shamans generally lack the full constellation of shamanic traits and talents. They may lack certain genetic and neurological advantages, are not born into shamanic families where they could begin receiving cultural capital as children, do not receive callings to shamanism, do not learn the skills and knowledge taught to shamanic apprentices, do not undergo initiation experiences that mark the transformation into practicing shamans, and do not perform in socially prescribed shamanic roles.

Shamanic artists, as members of traditional shamanic societies, do have these ways available to them. Some of these ways were available to Western contemporary artists that are not members of traditional shamanic societies – but are noncentral members of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman."

Less creative members of shamanic communities and art audience might have more neurological dopamine D2 receptors accompanied by higher degrees of latent

inhibition, fewer associations, and less divergent thinking, and a decreased likelihood of demonstrating symptoms of mental illness associated with creativity.

Voluntary Regulation of Attention

Shamans and contemporary artists deliberately engage in a wide variety of activities that regulate their attention. Some of these shared activities cultivate altered or alternate states of consciousness through work with dreams, ritual, drumming, dancing, music, trance, symbols, or occult practices. Some shamans use entheogens, psychoactive substances taken for spiritual purposes, to regulate attention. With similar intentions, some artists also use entheogens; in contrast, other artists use hallucinogens, which may have the same chemical substances as entheogens, but lack spiritual context and intent.

Used to Benefit

A shaman's practice benefits that shaman's community and also individual community members, providing for social, psychological, physiological, and spiritual needs. All of these services may be provided through works of art made by shamanic artists or shamanistic artists – which are deliberately created for the purpose of providing these benefits. Yet, an artist's intention is not sufficient to insure that intended benefits are received. Creative traits, talents, skills, beliefs, and processes of individual audience members strongly influence art audience experiences.

Systems: Shamans and Shamanic Communities, Artists and Art Audiences

All of the defining constructs of *shaman* work together in processes that require shamans *and* shamanic communities, artists *and* art audiences. These relationships are components of complex social systems with ongoing feedback loops. Component parts and interactive processes of the shamanic artist/audience system are set out in Figure 24.

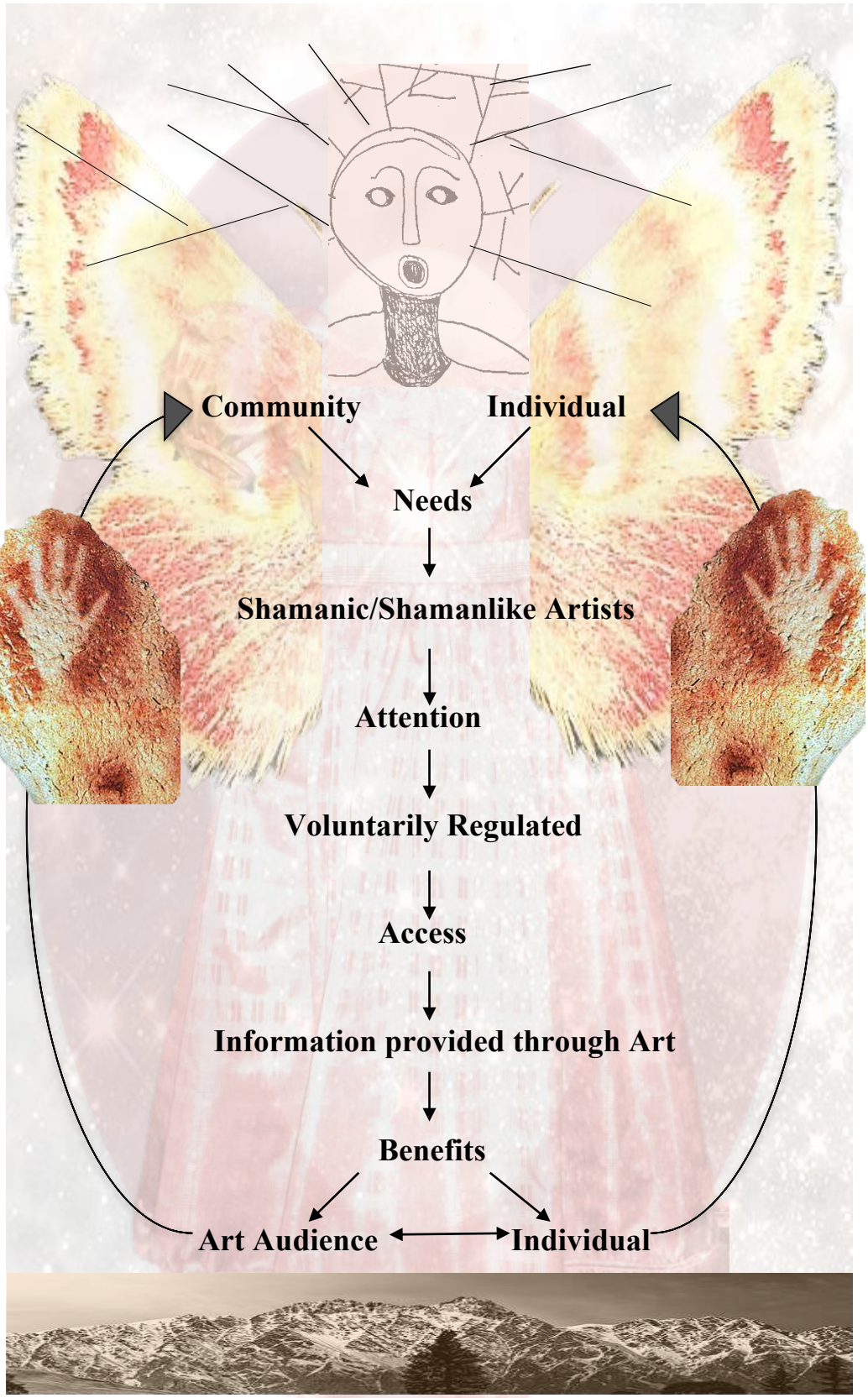


Figure 24. Cycle of shamanic/shamanlike artists and art audience.

These creative persons and processes interact in a cyclical fashion that is dynamic, interrelated, and interdependent, differentiated into specific roles, and situated within a community or multiple overlapping communities (see Senge, 1990 for a general discussion of systems thinking).

Descriptive Theoretical Model

Although artists may be found who qualify as shamans according to a classical, strictly bounded definition of *shaman*, the primary research question allowed for partial, fragmented, or temporally fleeting fulfillment of a construct. The application of cognitive linguistic categories revealed relationships between shamans and subsets of contemporary artists marked by family resemblances and gradations of membership in fuzzy sets.

This approach embraces complexity that more accurately represents the multifaceted population of artists. In addition, the ways in which contemporary artists fulfill the defining constructs of *shaman* may differ from the ways used by traditional shamans.

Thus, in some regards, a subset of contemporary artists may be similar to – but not the same as – shamans. These contemporary artists have family resemblances to shamans but do not qualify as shamans. There may be spectrums of artists for each defining construct. Moreover, there probably are variations within an individual artist's oeuvre, with some creative products serving more shamanic or shamanlike functions than others.

Within subsets of the conceptual category *contemporary artists*, all defining constructs of *shaman* were found. There is a small subset of contemporary artists who are

socially designated as shamans, working as spiritual practitioners, able to obtain information in ways not generally available to their communities through voluntarily regulation of their own attention, towards providing benefits to their community and its members. Generally, however, there appears to be variation in how many defining constructs are represented. The construct explicit social designation as shaman is most frequently absent.

Central Membership and Prototypical Shamanic Artists

Contemporary artists who qualified as shamanic artists,were identified by fulfilling all defining constructs of *shaman.* Examples of prototypical shamanic artists include South Korean Kim Kum Hwa, Ojibwe Norval Morrisseau, Hungarian Jóska Soós, and Peruvian mestizo Pablo César Amaringo. These contemporary artists represent prototypical shamanic artists. Figure 25 shows shamanic artists with prototypical membership in the strictly bounded, "Classical Category Shaman."

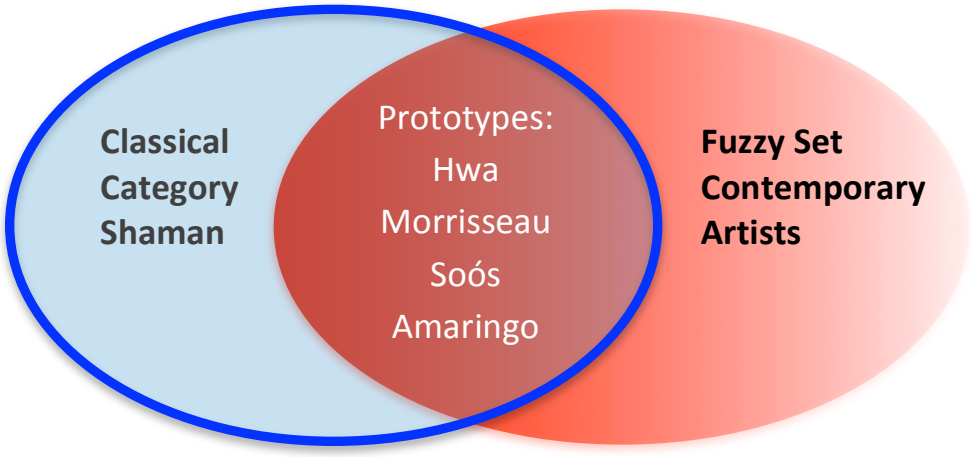


Figure 25. Prototypical shamanic artists are members of the Classical Category Shaman and the Fuzzy Set Contemporary Artists.

Shamanic artists can be located in several different sets: within the "Classical Set Shaman" where all members share the same defining properties; as central members of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman"; and as members in the fuzzy set "Contemporary Artists."

Shamanic artists appear to be comparatively rare and all shamanic artists identified in this study are also members of traditional shamanic societies. Complete fulfillment of all defining properties of the classical set "Shaman" might only be possible for artists who are members of traditional shamanic communities in that a shamanic community provides the strongest form of social designation. Moreover, members of a shamanic community are more likely to participate in the same spiritual practices, share the same beliefs, have knowledge of the same cosmology, and share a common history. These common properties might allow community members to enter more deeply into creative shamanic community processes when engaging shamanic art.

Noncentral Membership and Shamanistic Artists

When the prototypical shamanic artists from the "Classical Set Shaman" are placed within the "Fuzzy Set Shaman," these shamanic artists become central members. Contemporary artists who partially fulfill some or all constructs defining *shaman* show a gradation of membership in the "Fuzzy Set Shaman."

Contemporary artists found to have some, but not all defining constructs of *shaman* are categorized as non-central members in the set "Fuzzy Set Shaman." Their shamanlike practices may be labeled *shamanistic* in the sense of "relating to or characteristic of" (-Ist, 2010) shamanism; that is, shamanlike, in some limited, partial, fragmentary, or inconsistent fashion. Noncentral, shamanistic artists do not fully qualify as shamans.

Figure 26 lists contemporary artists who are either central or non-central members of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman" and the "Fuzzy Set Contemporary Artists."

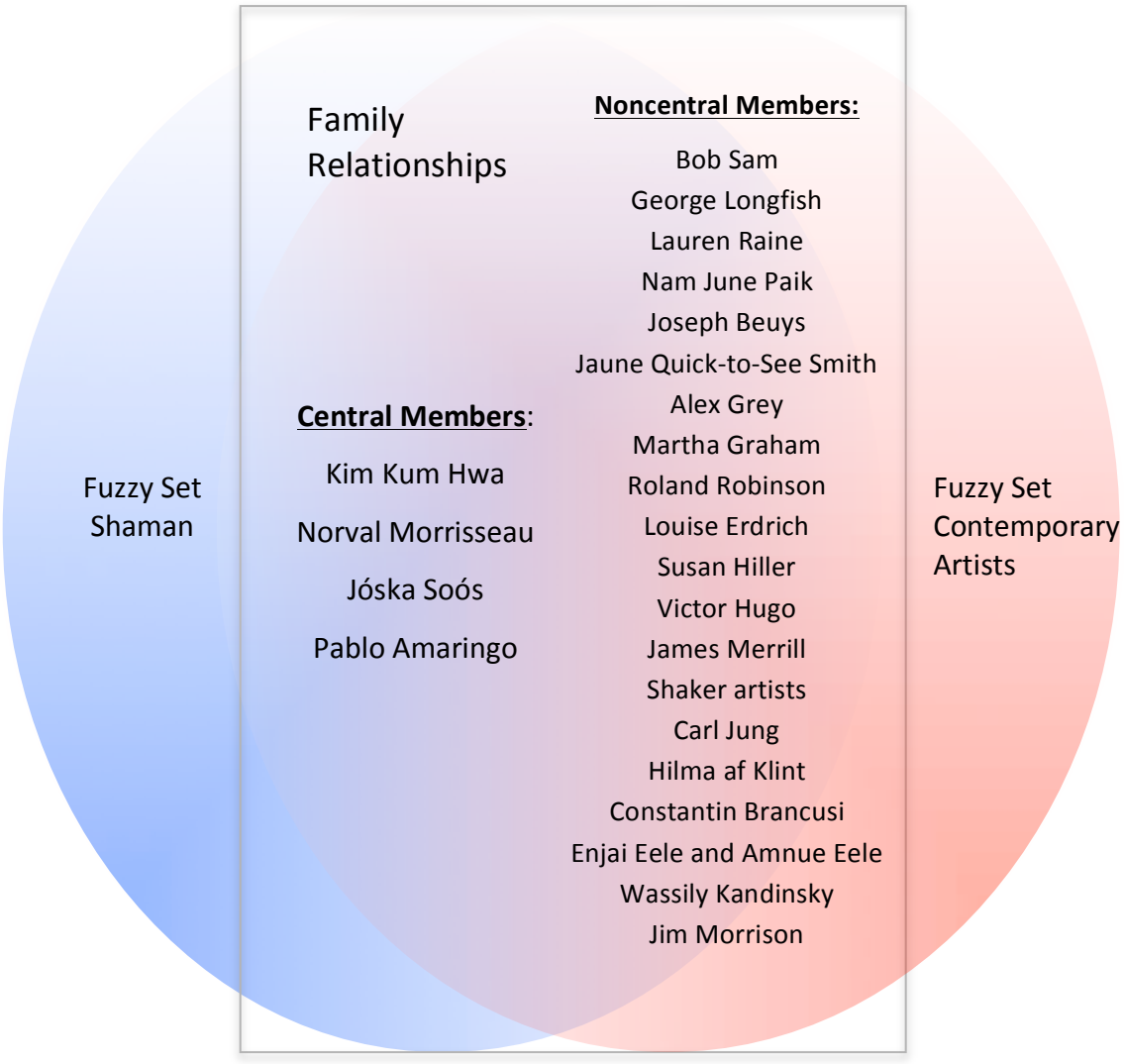


Figure 26. Central members and noncentral members have family relationships within the intersection of Fuzzy Set Shaman and Fuzzy Set Contemporary Artist.

As represented in Figure 26, all central and noncentral members of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman," who also are members of the fuzzy set "Contemporary Artists," have a family resemblance wherein all members have some but not all shamanic properties in common.

Moreover, different subsets have different common properties; that is, one subset of shamanistic artists may be spiritual practitioners who provide benefits to their communities while a second subset of shamanistic artists might cultivate altered states of consciousness, report paranormal experiences, and create without intent to benefit an audience.

Presentation of Findings

Shamanic Artists

After comparing, analyzing, and categorizing the data collected for this study, the results suggest that the following theoretical model might describe shamanic artists:

- *Shamanic-artists are spiritual practitioners* who use creative processes that engage the unconscious, collective unconscious, paranormal, sacred, archetypal, divine, or other realms of a spiritual nature through practices that often involve numinous inspiration, rituals, the occult, performance, purported spirit communication, and other forms of artistic creativity.
- *Shamanic artists voluntarily regulate attention* through a variety of processes, including neurological processes that may increase synchronization, dopamine levels, and slow brain-wave patterns, through the use of entheogens, meditation, ritual, food restriction, sleep deprivation, music, dancing, or other methods. Shamanic artists, as creators, tend to have certain personality traits such as tolerance of ambiguity, androgyny, regression in service of ego, positive

disintegration, which may be symptoms interpreted by the medical model as mental illness, and spiritual emergence. Shamanic artists are likely to come from families with clusters of shamans and shamanic traits, likely accompanied by genetic/inherited talents. Shamanic artists are more likely to be high in traits associated with transliminality, extra sensitivity, reports of paranormal experiences, and fluid boundaries.

- *Shamanic artists access information unavailable to their community, the art audience,* because the aforementioned traits, training, and experiences, as dynamic systems, provide opportunities for experiences that allow the shamanic artist to access information that is generally unavailable to individuals without these properties and processes.
- *Shamanic artists create works of art intended to provide benefits to the art audience and its individual members.* The benefits may be social, psychological, physiological, or spiritual in nature. Shamanic artists may also create work to provide ecological and environmental benefits. *Intent* may be a quality that differentiates shamanic artists from artists without shamanic properties.
- *Shamanic artists receive social designation* either explicitly through title indicating a practicing shaman or implicitly by fulfilling all other defining constructs of *shaman,* especially with regards to the intent to provide benefits to others.
- *For an artist to fully qualify as a shamanic artist, all defining constructs of shaman must be fulfilled* including social designation, spiritual practitioner, voluntary regulation of attention, access of information unavailable to the artist's

community, and creation of art with the intention of providing benefits to the art audience.

Because shamanic artists fulfill all constructs defining *shaman,* shamanic artists are different than shamanistic or shamanlike artists.

Shamanistic or Shamanlike Artists

When considering the clusters of traits and patterns of behaviors found in artists with family resemblances to shamans, the following properties stand out. As seen in a second theoretical model, these shamanistic or shamanlike artists are *likely* to:

- Demonstrate many, but not all, of the constructs defining shaman.
- *Create with intent to benefit their community*; that is, their art audience and/or individuals in that art audience.
- *Lack social designation as shamans*, especially of an explicit nature. However, if implicit means of indicating social designation are accepted, then more of these artists might qualify as artist-shamans.
- Show many traits associated with transliminality as well as pro-C, "Big C," or eminent creativity.
- *Engage in being creativity, not deficiency creativity, which is typical of self-actualized individuals*. Shamanlike artists are likely to have passed through the deficiency creativity stage during a healing process and may qualify as wounded healers.
- Be in, or have evolved through, the generative developmental stage.
- Receive spiritual inspiration.and create art as a spiritual practice without believing in a culturally-specific shamanic cosmology.

Shamanistic or shamanlike artists generally do not belong to or originate from a shamanic community. However, there are exceptions. However, artists who are members of traditional shamanic communities might fulfill all defining constructs of *shaman* to some extent, except for social designation. Shamanic communities might consider additional properties or subconstructs to differentiate their artists from their shamans.

Contemporary artists who represent weak examples of shamanistic artists are probably more numerous. Their fulfillment of constructs defining *shaman* might be fleeting or lack development. Defining constructs might be expressed randomly and intuitively without deliberate practice. A construct might appear in isolation without integrating additional defining constructs.

Validation

In theoretical research, objective markers for validity are not standardized. Some university faculty have viewed theoretical research as harder, requiring more work, and riskier (University of Denver, 2005) because, in part, objective markers for validity are not standardized and new, original contributions are usually more difficult to achieve. Nonetheless, multiple guideposts point to several methods of validation. In this study, validation was achieved via multiple paths blazed by previous researchers in the formulation of theoretical models, set theory, structures for comparisons, accepted archival research methods, and recent research innovations in arts-based inquiry, towards achieving "a coherence of aspects…from intellect, body, emotions, aesthetic feelings, and direct knowing…." (Braud, 1998, p. 232).

Theoretical Methods and Models

To help guide theoretical research, Kenny (2010b) advised reviewing the "state of theory regarding the phenomenon or phenomena to be investigated" (p. 6). Kenny then asked a series of questions regarding the adequacy of previous theories regarding new or overlooked data, adequate complexity, cultural bias, gaps, and cross-disciplinary synthesis. While Kenny's questions initially confirmed my approach to the historical overview of the West's associations between artists and shamans, his questions later supported my intended approach to this study. Kenny's questions may now be applied towards the validation of this study's methods and results.

Previous theories were inadequate due to over-simplification, incomplete or flawed operationalization of *shaman,* a lack of systematic comparisons between artists and *shaman,* and incomplete descriptions. Translations of Russian publications on shamans are now available as are extensive online databases and publications from previously centuries. Furthermore, to my knowledge, only one study attempted to integrate data from creativity studies.

A theoretical model is a "systematic representation of linked groups of social functions which can be shown to 'fit' the social system they underpin by being essential to bring about its properties" (D. Pratt, 2011, p. 46).

Franck (2002) summarized the social science modeling process in these key steps:

> (1) Beginning with the systematic observation of certain properties of a given social system, (2) we infer the formal (conceptual) structure which is implied by those properties. (3) This formal structure, in turn, guides out study of the social mechanism which generates the observed properties. (4) The mechanism, once identified, either confirms the advanced formal structure, or indicates that we need to revise it. (p. 295)

In this study, initial model building observed properties, systematically represented properties, and showed how groups of shamanic social functions are linked in the operationalized definition of *shaman*, meeting the requirement for observing and defining the *properties* of a social system established by Deirdre Pratt (2011) and Franck (2002).

A theoretical model was "formulated on the basis of the functions needed to achieve the above properties" consisting of an "architecture of functions" (D. Pratt, 2011, p. 45). An initial theoretical model of the shamanic artist was implied in the research question plus the operationalized definition of *shaman*; that is, some contemporary artists fulfilled all necessary constructs defining *shaman,* serving as a socially designated spiritual practitioners who obtain information in ways not available to the shamanic artists' community through the voluntary regulation of the shaman's own attention which was used for the benefit of the shaman's community and its members.

Validation of a theoretical model often involves the formulation of an empirical model that depicts the "operating of the mechanism in a real-life situation" (D. Pratt, 2011, p. 45). Further validation then tests the model "against data, to see whether it actually generates the properties of the system" (D. Pratt, p. 45).

Validity of this study's initial theoretical model was partly achieved by testing how properties of artists and linked groups of artistic social functions fit within shamanic social systems, using multiple examples from a variety of different artists found in archival data. The data considered, including the real-life situations experienced by this researcher, confirmed the validity of the model and, indeed, provided the raw materials from which the final model was built.

The modeling process requires testing against data and examples "to see whether the theoretical model needs adjustment to fit the real-life functioning of the social system" (D. Pratt, 2011, p. 47). Two adjustments were performed. Because subsets of contemporary artists fulfilled some, but not all, constructs defining *shaman,* the creation of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman" was necessary to represent non-central members with familial relationships to *shaman.* Also, the operationalization of *social designation* was adjusted to allow for the inclusion of implicit social designation.

The resulting theoretical model was adequately complex to contain prototypical shamanic artists within the "Classical Category Shaman" as well as non-central shamanlike artists on the periphery of the "Fuzzy Set Shaman."

Relevant theoretical methods. Greening, Pilisuk, Taylor, and Williams (T. Greening, personal communication, August 24, 2008) included validation methods in their concise guide to theoretical research that is partly applicable to theoretical modeling. In addition to a theory based on "a thorough review of relevant theoretical and empirical literature," a theory "should have generalizability, internal consistency, agreement with known facts, [and] subjective explanatory value..." (T. Greening, personal communication, August 24, 2008). All of these methods were applied in this study. An extensive, critical review was performed. Archival data provided multiple data sources to insure, to the extent possible, agreement with known facts. Subjective explanatory value was provided by artist-researcher. Also, the presentation of data, poetry, story, and visual art allowed readers to enter into their own subjective experience.

Explanation through theory will be the task of future research. As Richards noted (personal communication, July 12, 2012), there are many possible explanations for the

phenomena and processes of shamanic artists and shamanlike artists, "which pull together variables and lend themselves to further testing," performed by researchers with practitioners of shamanic arts, and "more than one [explanation, model, or theory] may be true!"

Another method of validating theoretical research comes from the field of philosophy where theoretical "validity is achieved through an emphasis on logic, critical thinking, reading texts carefully, historical understandings, skill in conceptual analysis…etc." (D. Rothberg, personal communication, November 20, 2009). Analysis through cognitive linguistics, simple logic, conceptual analysis, careful operationalization of constructs, and broad historical understandings of the constructs and subconstructs of *shaman* contributed to critical thinking that generated the observations, interpretations, and models of contemporary artists as shamans offered herein.

In addition, full disclosure of methodology is believed to strengthen a study's results (Braud, 1998; Collen, 2008; Kenny, 2010b). For this reason, this study contained an extensive description of research methods including introduction and elucidation of advanced concepts as recommended by Kenny (2010b).

Furthermore, the validity of theoretical research can also be assessed by the quality of the research question, how well the research question is answered, arriving at results that are not obvious, and providing insight and understanding of results (Lovitts, 2007).

Although generating theory was beyond the scope of this study, the theoretical model did answer the research question, involved methods and data from several disciplines, provided a unified and clear representation containing nuanced descriptions

of a complex, multifaceted phenomena, and expanded our understanding of the relationships, similarities, differences, and potential developments between artists and shamans.

External validation. In addition, throughout this research process, the dissertation committee judged the rigor of this study's research methods. The committee critiqued the adequacy of data collection and operationalization of constructs. They reviewed and requested revisions in comparative processes and interpretations of data. The committee members are eminent creators in their own fields of expertise as well as leaders in the foundation and ongoing development of humanistic psychology.

Ruth Richards, an internationally recognized scholar on creativity originated the concept of everyday creativity and provided the foundational research on this subject. She was a key researcher in several groundbreaking studies on the associations between bipolar and schizophrenic spectrum disorders and creativity.

Stanley Krippner is an internationally recognized scholar on many topics relevant to this study, including shamanism, psychedelics, parapsychology, anomalous experiences, dreams, and aspects of creativity.

Art Bohart, a major contributor to the international development of psychotherapeutic methods informed by the values of humanistic psychology, empathetically understood how my experiences as an artist could contribute to this research. He also contributed his expertise on how the creative processes of catharsis and integration lead to individual change and growth. His values and ways of working are implicitly present throughout this dissertation.

Ultimately, readers of this dissertation will serve as judges of the model's quality. Judgments of researchers will be expressed if this study is used as a foundation or standard for future research on contemporary artists as shamans, strengthened by an understanding of past methodological weaknesses and a recognition of the importance of making systematic, thorough comparisons based on an operationalized and validated definition of *shaman.* The ideas offered herein may also inspire artists and art audience members, especially when shared through channels available to these populations. This is the kind of validation applied in heuristic research methods, where "a final validation must be left [as] to how the research is received, through publication, presentation, or perhaps performance. Indeed, it is in sharing the creative synthesis with others that the validity of heuristic work is established" (Hiles, 2008, p. 391).

The most valuable validation will occur when artists, art audience members, and art institutions gain knowledge and insight into shamanic artists. In their engagement with the arts, they can incorporate spiritual practices, receive healing, experience remembering, and undergo transformational positive disintegration and reintegration as they receive spiritual, social, psychological, and physiological benefits from the arts.

Generalization

One important assessment of research is whether findings of the study are generalized to places or populations where there is a lack of fit (University of Leicester, n.d.). While this study made careful comparisons and described ways in which properties of specific artists do or do not fulfill defining constructs of *shaman,* it is also important that the results of this study not be globally generalized onto all artists.

To be more specific, constructs defining *shaman* are *not* fulfilled by *all* contemporary artists. *Shaman* does not equal *artist* despite common properties found in prototypical, central examples.

Individual artists, specific works of art, certain creative processes and kinds of imagination, intentions, and elements of audience experiences can each be systematically and rigorously compared with specific aspects of shamanism. Future researchers can identify ways in which specific artists do – and do not – resemble shamans, providing more nuanced, complex, and accurate representations of the shamanic artist phenomena.

Archival Methods

Because the construction of the theoretical model utilized archival data, validation methods from archival research may be applied. In archival research, reliability is necessary but not sufficient to validity. Moreover, as Gallo (2009) observed:

> Each actor in the chain of custody of a particular archival source...exerts influence on the materials that are available. It is imperative to support...findings with multiple data points. By making the discovery of corroborating evidence a priority of your archival research strategy you ensure both that claims supported by weak evidence are eliminated and that your reported findings are as strong as possible. (pp. 265-266)

In this study, examples from a variety of shamanic cultures, practicing shamans, and contemporary artists were integrated with data from many scholarly disciplines, providing stronger corroborating evidence from multiple perspectives, which increased validity.

Arts-based Inquiry

Art as a research method and as an active presence within research reports is a relatively new innovation for which methods of evaluation are still evolving. Traditional methods of assessing validity are not especially effective or appropriate for poetry or

artwork. How can the research validity of art be assessed, asked Braud (1998), when "validity has to do with whether one's findings or conclusions are faithful or true to what one is studying" (p. 213)?

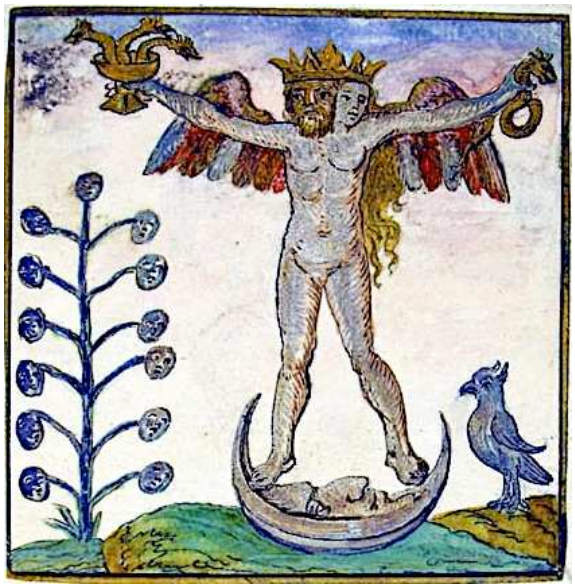
Creative person. In autoethnography or autobiographical research, authenticity of voice, reflexivity, and effect of work on reader are the major criteria for judging validity (Patton, 2002). Herein, I included stories explaining how I became interested in the topic of contemporary artists as shamans, how I developed a relationship with a work of art, and how aspects of my creative process seem to illustrate various aspects of shamanism being discussed including spirituality, visions, divination, dreams, and seeming paranormal experiences.

Creative product. Through the periodic integration of visual art, poetry, lyrical nonfiction, story, and a pinch of graphic design, I contributed my artist's way of exploring, discovering, understanding, explaining, and representing into the conventions of scholarly research. Some decades ago, I read a statement by the novelist John Fowles. I am unable to find the reference, so I must rely on my memory in which this quote remains crystalline: "Art is a woman. Science is a man. Life depends on their separation and their conjunction."

In arts-based inquiry, in a kind of *conjunctio oppositorum*, formal aesthetic values are integrated with rigorous research methods:

> Research must exhibit qualities of sound scholarship (focus, intensity, authority, relevance, substance, and so on), it must do so in a way that is congruent with the art form used…. Under scrutiny it ought to be evident that the purposes, processes, orientations, literatures, and outcomes of the study work together in harmony. (Cole & Knowles, 2008, p. 63)

I write here as the artist-researcher, the alchemist's hermaphrodite, the creative androgyne, this study being "our" offspring.



Mastery of the Lunar Element – Hermaphrodite upon the Crescent Moon, with Moon Tree and Bird from The Rosarium Philosophorum, 18th century.
University of Glasgow, Scotland, Special Collections.

The success of art in research requires adequate mastery of craft (Cole & Knowles, 2008; Leavy, 2008), which, in my opinion, not only involves technical and expressive qualities in a poem or in visual art, but also involves the interrelationships between the works of art and the scholarly text established through a sense of timing, placement, thematic development across multiple works of art, multidirectional relationships, and transitional rhythm in the coming and going to and from art to scholarship and back again. Thus, aesthetic values and design considerations can embrace an entire dissertation, subtly extending into page design, and potentially benefitting readers through pleasurable, perhaps even meaningful, aesthetic experiences.

Additional qualities provided by arts in research are the same as what Keen (1975) recommended in phenomenological research, namely vivid, accurate, rich, and elegant descriptions. Polkinghorne (1983) explained:

> Vividness is the quality that draws readers in, creating a feeling of genuineness. Accuracy is the dimension that makes the writing believable, creating a focus that enables readers to see the phenomenon as their own. Richness is the quality that deepens the description through colorful use of language, graphic depiction or shades of meaning, and detail, relaying something of the sensual-aesthetic tones of the phenomenon. Elegance is found in an economical use of words, disclosing the essence of the phenomenon through simple expressions that unify the description and give it grace and poignancy. (pp. 45-46)

To enhance the feeling of genuineness and establish a closer relationship with you, my reader, I shared autobiographical stories. These stories might also reveal my biases.

Within arts-based inquiry, creative media can include:

> Affective experiences, senses, and bodies, and imagination and emotion as well as intellect, as ways of knowing and responding to the world…gives interpretive license to the researcher to create meaning from experience…attends to the role of form in shaping meaning…by representing research in many different arrangements, appropriated from the art…and exists in the tensions of blurred boundaries… (Finley, 2008, p. 72)

I do not view this dissertation as a finely crafted, large-scale masterpiece – despite its length. Instead, ideas are proposed, questions are articulated, and opportunities for future research are part of a process that remains unfinished and still evolving. While many forms of research work towards definitive conclusions – and, to an extent, this study is not an exception – works of art in this dissertation contributed needed ambiguity and open-ended, personal interpretations to the experience of reading research. The art offered created an experience that remains wonderfully unresolved – more like a private sketchbook than a monument, more like a road sign or trail marker than a final destination, inviting the reader/art audience member to undertake a meaning-making journey through his or her own creative process.

Creative environmental press. In creative processes involving art, environmental press is not only active as a catalyst for making the art product.

Environmental press can also be created by the art product wherein art potentially serves as a catalyst creating imbalance, provoking strong emotions, unearthing memories, and/or presenting an unresolved situation, requiring response from an art audience. With regards to validity, then, art in research can also be judged on an artwork's "ability to evoke emotions, produce connections, create a scene that *feels* truthful, and inspire politically or socially conscious action" (Leavy, 2008, p. 82). If poetry or story calls "forth something from...experience" or helps to "shed light on an experience that is unfamiliar" (Leavy, p. 82) or if art illuminates the research process, then validity is enhanced. In this way, works of art in research can evoke sympathetic resonance in readers and serve as "thresholds of elicitation" (Braud, 1998, pp. 224-225).

Creative process. If art illuminates the research process, then validity is also enhanced (Leavy, 2008). Throughout this research process, I periodically felt a strong need to write a poem, draw in margins of a draft, or make a photo montage. I later recognized that the medium of photo montage felt especially appropriate because this study's multidisciplinary, cross-cultural approach is an integration of "disparate" data and photo montage can also be an integration of disparate images, revealing multiple relationships through spatial juxtaposition. At other times, while engaged in a scholarly style of writing, I would feel the swell and internal pressure of inspiration as the style of writing became lyrical prose or poetry. I honored these moments and integrated some of the visual or written art into the dissertation. These little works of art, like the sketches and marginalia scribbled into my personal library, provide readers access to alternate interpretations of the text. The artistic creative process also gave me insight into the research process.

Because I, the researcher, am the first reader of the research report and I am, as artist, the first viewer for the artworks herein, my own responses may contribute to assessing validity. When I consider the works of art included herein, I feel a sense of contentment and satisfaction, an intuition of the right fit, and a deeply felt conviction that without this artwork, the dissertation would not be complete.

Validation Methods Generating Future Research

Types of validation methods that go beyond assessing a study's research methods involve what I think of as "generative" validation methods; that is, what a study generates after the formal research is completed and how a study continues to contribute to a research trajectory.

Theoretical research can be validated by the "capacity to generate further empirical research" (T. Greening, personal communication, August 24, 2008). In contrast, Eugene Taylor (personal communication, November 21, 2009) wrote, "Theoretical dissertations are not preliminary studies to prepare for the allegedly superior empirical research later on. They are primary documents unto themselves…." However, like Greening et al., Eisner (1995) also asked how will the study contribute to future research? This criterion is appropriate for my dissertation because the study was conducted with the intention of providing a foundation for future research comparing artists and shamans. Such studies might elaborate, adjust, confirm, or disconfirm the results of this study. The model provided herein might contribute towards theory construction. Perhaps, more importantly, the findings of this study could confirm, inspire, and support the work of shamanic and shamanistic artists.

In arts-based research, validity is partially assessed based on "the number and quality of questions that the work raises" (Eisner, 1997, p. 268) as opposed to the success being measured by the number of questions that the work answers. In many regards, this study led to more questions than answers and some of these questions became recommendations for the extensive list of potential future studies offered in Appendix B.

Another generative validation method arose during a dialogue with Donald Rothberg (personal communication, November 20, 2009) who wrote: "In philosophy, we wouldn't talk of 'validating' a study. The question is: Is the study illuminating (in any number of ways?" This study is illuminating in the sense of shining light on relationships previously hidden in the dark of unawareness.

Generative validity may also be judged by resonant responses in readers (Braud, 1998). This kind of validity, however, depends as much on the knowledge, sensitivity, cognitive abilities, and receptivity of the reader as on the quality of the study – because the talents and skills of audience members vary widely.

In research, validation is performed to determine *if* a study's findings are accurate and true. Accuracy of data, logical processes, and conclusions can be judged. Judging what *is* true, however, requires a process dependent on how *truth* is defined. In India, ontological truth is found through participation in the "Great Chain of Being" (Braud, 1998). How does this study participate in life, existence, and being? This study forged stronger links between contemporary artists, art audiences, shamans, and shamanic communities. There is information provided that, if applied, could strengthen shamanic and shamanistic art practices and art audience skills. These issues are all relevant to theoretical models.

In China, Korea, or Japan, pragmatic truth is found through application, practice, or achievement of desired outcome (Braud, 1998, p. 232). Pragmatic indications of validity can be judged years after this study's conclusion. How was knowledge from this study applied by other researchers in their studies of shamanic artists or used by artists in their creative work? Did the study influence how audience members experience art, how art institutions present art, how art educators teach art? In such ways, pragmatic validity may be judged – in the future – by how the study alters experience and inspires ways of being. These ongoing processes are partly dependent upon my future actions as well as the decisions and actions of many groups and networks of individuals.

Opportunities, Recommendations, and Cautions

Reflecting upon the resurgence of interest in shamanism, Winkelman (2002) remarked:

> Shamanism has reemerged in the modern societies and in association with the healing professions because it reflects basic aspects of human nature rooted in psychobiological structures of healing processes of consciousness and the brain. These psychobiological perspectives on shamanism indicate a continued relevance of the shamanic paradigm and shamanistic healing. (p. 1882)

Winkelman's primarily focused on shamanic neurological processes which produce – and can be produced by - altered states of consciousness, integration, symbolism, and ritual. Yet, not all of these processes and properties necessarily produce healing. Some forms can cause harm.

Ethical Considerations

Professional expertise often requires approximately 10 years of training, education, apprenticeship, mentorship, and dedicated practice. This general "rule" applies to mastery of many different kinds of expertise as well as shamanic practices in some, but not all, shamanic societies. Without training in shamanism, a subset of contemporary

artists made art that has family resemblances, in creative processes and creative products, with shamanic practices.

At times, these shamanlike products were made intuitively, perhaps arising from enduring archetypes, in response to the needs of individuals, societies, or nature, created with beneficial intent.

However, despite beneficial intent, there may be ethical considerations limiting how far an artist's shamanlike practices should extend. While an extended discussion regarding appropriation from indigenous cultures will not be undertaken here, this topic remains an important issue in contemporary art.

Ethical concerns, grounded in a capacity for responsibility and deep caring, involves caring for one's self as well as for others.

> Whereas spiritual masters have been warning their disciples for thousands of years about the dangers of playing with mystical states, the contemporary spiritual scene is like a candy store where any casual spiritual 'tourist' can sample the 'goodies' that promise a variety of mystical highs. When novices who don't have the proper education or guidance begin to naively and carelessly engage mystical experiences, they are playing with fire. Danger exists on the physical and psychological levels, as well as on the level of one's continued spiritual development. (Caplan, 1999, p. 17)

Plastic shamans. While artists can potentially develop some skills, talents, and practices related to shamanism, there are serious ethical considerations involved in practicing shamanism. Without extensive training in traditional methods from a master shaman who determines when an apprentice is ready for initiation, a practitioner may not have adequate knowledge to provide safety to clients. Wearing the robe of the plastic shaman can endanger those who want to be participate in a shamanic community – as seen in the tragic outcome of a sweat lodge "ceremony" officiated by the charismatic self-help guide and "spiritual guru" James Ray:

> Brown, 38, and Shore, 40, both of whom paid nearly $10,000 to spend the week with Ray, died in the lodge.
>
> Neuman, 49, spent more than a week in a coma and died Oct. 17. Eighteen others were injured.
>
> Survivor Beverly Bunn told "Good Morning America" that even while people were collapsing, vomiting and gasping for air, Ray, who was leading the ceremony, urged everyone to stay inside.
>
> More than 60 people were gathered inside the tent hoping to cleanse their bodies. But within the hour people began to collapse and vomit, Bunn said.
>
> While people were not physically forced to remain in the tent, Bunn said Ray would chide them if they wanted to leave, saying weakness could be overcome. (Ferran, 2010)

Ray had claimed “extensive experience with sweat lodges and other Native American spiritual practices,” but his claims of being “initiated into three shamanic traditions, gaining expertise in a variety of spiritual and esoteric teachings, were either exaggerations or questionable” (Ortega, 2011). Ray used Holotropic Breathing without adequate training or certification. Ray’s knowledge of Hawaiian huna spiritual traditions was superficial and he was not initiated or given permission to use these teachings – which require “a decade or longer” apprenticeship (Ortega). After a few workshops, Ray incorporated huna techniques into his work despite being contacted by his huna teacher who asked him to stop. When he didn’t stop, the teacher refused to continue training him. Several Native leaders also contacted Ray regarding his lack of training and inadequate expertise in presenting Native American ceremonies (Ortega).

Although Ray is an extreme example of the dangers potentially arising from amalgamations of hastily studied, decontextualized fragments from multiple spiritual traditions, Ray does provide a dramatic illustration which can serve as a warning to both practitioners and members of their communities, artists and their audiences.

Snake oil cures. This study highlights similarities between shamans and contemporary artists. Indeed, there are many family resemblances between traditional shamans and subsets of contemporary artists.

However, this study is not a program on how to become a shaman. While the content may support, encourage, and nurture readers who are artists, it is not a substitute for studying with an initiated master.

Moreover, the shamanic technologies described herein are not offered as a cure for mental illness, especially with regards to bipolar disorders or schizophrenia. Although most artists are mentally healthy, only showing mild tendencies or slight evidence of symptoms, not having enough symptoms to qualify for psychopathological diagnosis, or likely to have a family member with psychopathology, there are many artists who might benefit from psychiatric and/or psychotherapeutic interventions. More severe forms of mental illness seriously disrupt creativity and productivity, lessen daily functioning, cause suffering, and, sadly and tragically, might even lead to suicide.

Although, information herein might help some individuals cope with mental illness (see McNiff, 1992, regarding art therapy and shamanism), engaging in shamanistic creativity is not a snake oil that can cure all forms of mental illness.

Kremer: Recovery of Indigenous Mind

As represented by the many contemporary, Western/European American artists described herein, artistic and creative expressions of shamanism continue to be evident in partial and fragmented ways. These “living” signs reveal a surviving undercurrent of shamanism that is not necessarily borrowed from traditional cultures.

Productive ways to develop shamanism in the West, without unethical cultural appropriation, were described by the psychologist-artist Jürgen Kremer (1999) in his article, "Shamanic Inquiry as Recovery of Indigenous Mind: Toward an Egalitarian Exchange of Knowledge." Over many years, Kremer worked with elders, shamans, healers, and Sámi naidis in the Americas, Asia, and Europe, while also exploring his own ancestral shamanic and mythic culture.

To remedy the problems associated with cultural starvation resulting from "the loss of indigenous conversations in eurocentered societies" (p. 131) and cultural appropriation, Kremer (1999) shared:

> I find it only legitimate to write about shamanism if what I write is true to my own shamanic tradition…. We can only be proper participants in shamanic exchange and dialogue if we know who we are as indigenous people. Otherwise we should take our hands off of other cultures. (p. 129)

Kremer also stressed, "As long as we think writing about shamanism is about 'them,' we remain unconscious of shamanism in us" (p. 128). Furthermore, etic inquiry too easily perceives aspects of shamanic beliefs, experiences, or practices as:

> Unusual, inexplicable or even bizarre…. Thus we exaggerate the unusualness of phenomena, ultimately only trivializing it because it is denuded of what it is a natural part of. It splits individual healing from communal or cultural healing, it neglects that individual illness is situated in the context of a process of cultural balancing – history, place, story, ceremony, etc. (p. 130)

Kremer then pointed out how closely related are the concepts of healing in *wholeness* and *holiness*. To be healed requires achieving wholeness which can require and/or lead to holiness. He then quoted Lincoln (1986) who wrote "that it is not just a damaged body that one restores to wholeness and health, but the very universe itself…. the healer must understand and be prepared to manipulate nothing less than the full structure of the cosmos" (p. 118).

As a healer in the realm of scholarship and inquiry, Kremer advocated for healing the split between researcher and research population, between scholar and shamans, in part by participating in balanced dialogue between partners, an integration of spirit(s), dreams, ceremonies, engagement, soft and fluidly bounded ego, nature, our planet, and ancestors – without projective identification. Thus, instead of regression in service of ego, people would engage in recovery of indigenous mind, a "reintegration of cultural shadow material," and a retraction of projection.

Moreover, Kremer strongly recommended that researchers not discuss spirits unless the researchers have themselves experienced spirits, "Otherwise it seems more appropriate to be silent about a universe only partly seen" (p. 135). Kremer transparently revealed his own out-of-body experience, followed by years of searching, travelling, fasting, dancing, participating in sweat lodges, and instruction by many Native teachers.

Kremer advocated recovering one's own ethnic, indigenous roots, "not to recreate a past long gone, but to move into the future in a complete, holistic conversation" (p. 128).

> My interest is in the specificity of the immanent conversation, not just in order to pay homage to cultural diversity, but to continue and affirm the specific indigenous knowledge (whether ecological, medical, astronomical, or otherwise) which can help us in our time of crisis. (p. 128)

Recommendations for Artists and Art Audiences

Within the contemporary art scene, shamanism continues to be an emergent property that is demonstrating a capacity to evolve and development (see Bánáthy, 1996; 2000, regarding emergent properties and evolving systems). How could recovery of indigenous mind and the development of shamanic beliefs and practices contribute to our cultural evolution through to the creativity of art audiences, artists, art educators, and art

institutions? How can these populations contribute to the recovery of "indigenous mind" of multiple ethnicities in a global village while also supporting and respecting those people who have retained indigenous ways of being? How can the practices of art engaged populations build community, retrieve stories and ceremonies, invent compelling and relevant spiritual rituals, participate together in myths, and engage spirits, earth, nature, and ancestors? What would be gained by these endeavors? What splits would be healed? Who will be our teachers?

Transforming deficiency creativity into being creativity. When you create, what and who are you attempting to heal? A subset of artists are initially motivated by what has been conceptualized by Celeste Rhodes (1997) as "deficiency needs," that is, needs that are lower on Maslow's (1971) hierarchy of needs, such as safety, belonging, self-esteem, or love. Deficiency need creativity can be used to resolve personal problems, such as troubled relationships or past traumas, or simply to rebuild boundaries or regain balance.

Yet, over time, deficiency creativity can evolve into being creativity during which growth needs are met and self-actualization can occur. This change process can occur during the process of creating a single work of art, across a period of years, or in a series of cycles.

For the Journey

Wheels turning on the ground of
being while moving
forward on the plane of time.

Wheels turn pulleys, going up
to realms of heaven,
going down to realms below.

Wheels bringing cold water from
dark earth of being,
fetching stars, night's gifts of light,

Pouring into this poem cup,
darkness, lightness, down,
up, going, returning, wheels.

Denita Benyshek, May 23, 2012

Invitation. I invite you to be a co-creator in applying the results of this study towards enhancing and enriching your relationships with art, artists, and creativity. When you attend an art event, ask: How you might benefit psychologically, socially, physiologically, or spiritually from the art shared? What can you do to heighten your experience and more fully receive these benefits? As an artist, how might your studio practices, writing exercises, publications, exhibits, and performances evolve to become spiritual practices? Shamanic artists such as Tito la Rosa provide role models for spiritual art practices that even include arranging and touching musical instruments in a sacred way (Tito La Rosa - Peruvian Musician and Sound Healer, n.d.).

Furthermore, the creative process can be catalyzed by environmental press consisting of an unresolved personal issue such as child abuse, then transcend personal growth needs to encompass many people in a universal expression that could provide companionship, compassion, acknowledgment, support, and meaning – as I witnessed at a 1991 exhibit entitled *Silent No More,* a powerful, public statement about the experience of child abuse by a group of Seattle artists who were sexually abused as children.

As demonstrated earlier in this dissertation, artistic creativity can be a means of healing for artist, art audience, society, and even the *Zeitgeist.* Inasmuch as everyone is

wounded in some fashion, there are many candidates for the role of wounded healer. The story of Bob Sam, shared in the opening pages of this dissertation, is a good example. Sam moved from alcoholism into apprenticeship, then onto performances that address the deficiency needs of others while also integrating spirituality – without explicit social designation as a shaman.

Shamanic training, mental illness, and mental health. There appears to be a variety of traditional shamanic skills applied towards the control, beneficial utilization, and transformation of symptoms and experiences that would otherwise qualify as signs of psychopathology. If contemporary artists struggling with certain kinds of mental illness learn learned to structure and apply their shamanic skills, would their suffering be alleviated, even partially? Would shamanlike training and initiation transform these artists into mentally healthy individuals who created art with the intent to benefit others?

Whatever the initial triggers, interpretations of mental illness invariably rely on cultural beliefs, which then, in turn, predict and shape the course of mental illness. "Culture shapes the way general psychopathology is going to be translated partially or completely into specific psychopathology" (Lee & Kleinman, 2007). Furthermore:

> NOWHERE ARE THE limitations of Western ideas and treatments more evident than in the case of schizophrenia. Researchers have long sought to understand what may be the most perplexing finding in the cross-cultural study of mental illness: people with schizophrenia in developing countries appear to fare better over time than those living in industrialized nations. (Kale, 2010)

Zanzibar society believes mental illness arises from external causes, instead of genetic flaws, neurological processes, character weakness, past trauma, or other causes (McGruder, 1999). In Zanzibar, mental illness is viewed as a sign of spirit possession and does not result in stigma or isolation. Traditional interventions sustain and strengthen family ties. Illness-causing spirits might be given gifts and celebrated with song and

dance, thus placating the spirits' grievances and reducing the harm caused. Then, the healed individual is seen as capable of resuming social and familial responsibilities and is viewed as free of the affliction; whereas, in the West, the taint of mental illness often, even usually, endures.

Given the higher rate of mental illness, or mild, subclinical forms of mental illness, in artists and eminent creators, plus the allegedly higher rate of success treating schizophrenia in traditional societies as compared to the West (Kale, 2010), there may be important, even critical, practices, skills, beliefs, and social structures in traditional shamanic societies that would greatly benefit non-traditional contemporary artists. Perhaps developing shamanic or shamanistic abilities would benefit artists initially and, eventually, provide social benefits as well.

Without belief in a shamanic cosmology, there may be a limited degree to which artists might benefit from shamanistic practices, that is, practices that are somewhat similar to but different than shamanic practices. There may be ways that traditional shamans obtain information – and control, understand, and structure that information – that will remain unavailable to most contemporary artists. But, perhaps when shamanic pasts are reclaimed, ancestors are acknowledged and honored, and spiritual practices are reconstructed and newly created, perhaps then contemporary artists can learn more skills for controlling, interpreting, and productively using what is now seen as symptoms of mental illness. This change could then also provide social, psychological, physiological, and spiritual benefits to others.

Recommendations for Art Institutions

An improved understanding of the artist-shaman's creative person, process, product, and environmental press could also influence the creative practices of art schools, including faculty selection, course content, and how students are trained.

Art institutions can also support shamanic art through exhibitions, performances, publications, and productions. Offering interpretations of art that integrate accurate knowledge of shamanism and shamanic arts is necessary to educate audiences. Such education might enhance the shamanistic creativity of art audiences. These audiences might then receive more benefits from shamanic and shamanistic art.

Of course, new visionary, shamanistic art institutions might be created with mission statements committed to spiritual practice of the arts, developing skills to voluntarily regulate attention, teaching methods for accessing information generally unavailable to the community, and communicating accessed information through art with the intent to benefit communities and individuals.

Recommendations for Researchers

Because of the many aspects of shamanism and artistry explored herein and the multiple sources of data, this study became a broad sweep of some major issues, a sketch on a large canvas with a broad brush. Some similarities, some differences, and some commonly held beliefs, traits, and practices were discovered. These discoveries generated more questions than definitive answers, however, and unearthed many topics awaiting further development from more narrowly focused studies.

Researcher transparency and art audience studies. Most of what is known or theorized about intrapsychic creative processes in the art audience, as inspired and

catalyzed by art, is coming from fields outside of creativity studies and psychology with only a few exceptions (e.g., Pritzker, 2007; Zausner, 2007).

In peer-reviewed publications devoted to creativity studies, researcher transparency is rarely integrated and does not appear to be valued. The positivist model continues to rule with little evidence of postmodernist or feminist thinking that supports multiple voices and perspectives including research transparency. For example, we rarely know why a researcher selected a certain artist or population for study. We are not told about how a researcher's relationship with an artwork developed over time, what memories were evoked, or if positive disintegration, catharsis, ecstasy, mysticism, or psi experiences occurred. We do not know if the researcher-audience member experienced psychological, social, physiological, or spiritual healing occurred during relationship with a single work of art, an artist's oeuvre, or a school of art.

Without such information, provided by trained observers who are capable of reflection, understand psychological processes, and possess the language skills to articulately describe what they experienced, the field of creativity studies lacks data on art audience experience. Moreover, the West's individualism, especially as seen in the United States, and tendencies towards hero worship result in most studies of arts related creativity focusing on artists, especially famous artists, and few studies focus on creative audience response. This situation presents many opportunities for researchers.

In anthropology, the important contributions of researcher transparency are understood. The eminent anthropologist Edith Turner was an expert on shamanism, tribal rituals, traditional healing, shared consciousness and other topics, described her personal

phenomenological experiences involving spirits, traditional rituals, and a sense of shared consciousness with research subjects in many of her publications (see E. Turner, 1996a)

In anthropology, research methods include participant-observation where the researcher's own experiences are integrated into research data and presentation. Feminist anthropologists (see Behar, 1996) gathered research data from their own individual experiences. Humanist psychologists, including the members of my dissertation committee, also fluidly integrated personal experiences into some of their studies. Researcher transparency makes emic and etic relationships explicit, potentially reducing the polarization of inside vs. outside perspectives, and humanizes research by integrating subjective and phenomenological experiences with collected data, analysis, results, and discussion.

Future research. Appendix B, Recommendations for Future Research, provides an incomplete list of narrowly focused but indepth studies needed to increase our knowledge of shamanic creativity, shamanic artists, shamanistic artists, and art audiences as shamanic communities. This dissertation was deliberately written so that a search using the terms "future research" will lead directly to suggestions for future studies that are placed within the context where the need was originally recognized.

Delimitations

The population of artists considered was delimited by the operationalization of the construct *contemporary* to mean the period of time from the invention of the steam engine in 1775 to the present.

The definition of *shaman* operationalized herein is delimited by construction as a classical category with absolute boundaries; whereas the concepts *shamanlike* and

shamanistic are fuzzy sets with varied members having family resemblances and gradated degrees of membership.

The operationalized definition of *shaman* excludes shamans who practice with the intent of causing harm to individuals or communities.

Multicultural sensitivity requires mindfulness of issues around cultural appropriation evident in art and spiritual practices. Duran and Duran (1990) commented on how "there are many non-Native American people who are embracing traditional concepts and actually portraying themselves as traditional medicine people or shamans….the Native American community perceives these imposters as exploitative and disrespectful" (p. 10). To help remedy this situation, neoshamanism was excluded from this study – although this does not discount the spiritual validity of the syncretic practices developed by neoshamanists.

Because this research is conducted within a Western university setting, using data produced by scholars printed in peer-reviewed publications – the perspective represented herein is overwhelmingly etic with regards to shamanism.

Limitations

Limitations in Data Collection

Even if a study's literature review is extensive and the scholarship is of high quality, there are limitations in the validity of any study.

The amount of data regarding shamans, shamanism, shamanic communities, artists, art, audience, creativity, transpersonal psychology, and other topics related to this study, is vast. Inevitably, relevant data was omitted, overlooked, or simply not found. Conceivably, an analysis of the shamanic properties of the creative persons, processes,

products, and environmental press of a different set of artists might shift the results of the comparisons.

I deliberately performed a broad sweep with a broom and, in that dance, considered a diverse range of artists, in media, styles, ethnicity, nationality, era, and degrees of fame. The common (but not unilateral) bias in creativity studies, art criticism, and art history – towards "high" art and against "low" art – is freed herein by the spirit of postmodernism. For example, classical, rock, and popular music is used in comparisons alongside a summer "flick" and folk art. This variation also widened the range of art to which results of the study may be generalized and increased the number and types of artists that may be contained within the theoretical model.

Nonetheless, in an undertaking of this scope, it is impossible to cover all relevant topics and integrate all relevant data. This study is one step in the exploration of contemporary artists as shamans.

Limitations in English Language

> Indigenous people believe that without artists, the tribal psyche would wither to death. Artistic ability, the capacity to heal, and the vision to see into the Other World are connected. There is only a thin line between the artist and the healer. In fact, there is no word for art in the Dagara language. The closest term to it would be the same word as sacred.
>
> Malidoma Patrice Somé (1999, p. 92)
> Multidisciplinary scholar and Dagara shaman

Archival data collection was limited to publications in English. As a result, perspectives and data from many nationalities and ethnicities were omitted.

Further, there are words in English, such as *art* or *artist,* without comparable words and concepts in other languages. The use of these English words in this dissertation, to describe all persons and their creative-spiritual-healing products and

processes is potentially misleading and, inevitably, inadequate without a fuller, whole culture context.

The same limitations apply to *shaman.* As Kremer (1999) explained:

> The *Ism* of shamanism is the part "made up" or constructed by the early ethnographers and anthropologists serving the abstracting and universalizing pursuit of truth as defined in the western sciences. This definition of science is inherently imperialistic, as it relinquishes its participation in the phenomena in order to grasp and control what is left to be see after the act of dissociation…. (p. 128)

As such,

> as shaman*ism* attempts to grasp the desired knowledge it may reflect more of itself in the mirror, than of the native peoples it is interacting with. In this sense the *Ism* of shamanism is all made up by eurocentric thinking. (Kremer, 1999, p. 128)

As Ingold (2002a) explained, "concepts like society, culture, nature, language, technology, individuality and personhood, equality and inequality, even humanity itself – becomes essentially contestable" (p. xvii).

Ingold (2002a) also stated that "theoretical work...is largely a matter of opening up these concepts for inspection and unpacking their contents, thereby revealing the often hidden baggage that we carry with us into our encounters with unfamiliar realities" (p. xvii). In this study, many trunks and suitcases were unlocked and partially emptied, for the purpose of studying baggage, by unfolding philosophies, histories, theories, and arguments during a critical review of literature, and by shaking out the concepts *shaman, art, artist, mental illness,* and *mental health.* To the extent possible, throughout this study, I strove to "think outside the suitcase."

Multicultural Limitations and Transformational Opportunities

Yet, no matter how far this study travelled and regardless of how may bags were unpacked, despite all of the perspectives integrated here, I am one individual who is the

product of a certain time, place, culture, society, education, etc. I am not a member of a traditional shamanic community, which is an important limitation to the proposed study. I am of Czech/Moravian descent, and spent much of my childhood in a community of immigrants that sustained some folk traditions, agricultural rituals, and memories of animistic beliefs and practices from "the old country." The Slavic *Weltanschauung* is an important aspect of my way of being and provides a viewpoint outside "mainstream" America. At the same time, I am a European American woman who is a citizen of the United States of America.

Nonetheless, I recognized that previous studies of contemporary artists as shamans, especially in the field of art history, tended to underutilize data regarding artists from shamanic cultures in favor of Caucasian artists who were inspired by facets of shamanism, perhaps intuitively or, sometimes, as part of a creative process that appropriated symbols, themes, and formal elements from so-called "primitive" shamanic arts (see Colin Rhodes, 1994). The field of anthropology did provide studies of shamanic artists but this data was not integrated into art history research.

In the past, and to a great extent in the present, Caucasian artists were more likely to be recognized by established gatekeepers at highly regarded art institutions and this selective "tendency" then also extended into many studies of creativity that rarely considered artists from shamanic societies.

Winter Still Life Landscape, I see you.

Molly McGlennen, I hear you.

I remember and I will do all that I can.

Against this historical background, this researcher deliberately sought out and included artists from many different ethnic groups. As a result, several contemporary artists, who also served as socially designated shamans in traditional cultures, were described and their beliefs, spiritual practices, experiences, and creative work made important contributions to this study. These traditional shamanic artists represented the most complete fulfillment of the defining constructs of *shaman.* Furthermore, this study gave traditional shamanic artists leading roles in comparisons instead of comparing Western, European American, nontraditional artists first and then relegating traditional artists to second place. Thus, this study helped remedy the marginalization of traditional shamanic societies in art history and creativity studies.

To the best of my ability, as recommended by the American Psychological Association (2010), I avoided using my own group "as the standard against which others are judged." I also followed this organization's suggestions to reduce bias in language. Yet, despite my best intentions, I may be blind as to how by the blinders of dominant cultural skew the results of the proposed study.

I acknowledge limitations inherent in my culture and race – and apologize in advance for any harm this may cause.

Research methods must also be sensitive to multicultural issues and the validity of emic perspectives. Duran and Duran (1995) argued in favor of a "postcolonial paradigm [that] would accept knowledge from different cosmologies as valid in their own right, without their having to adhere to a separate cultural body for legitimacy" (p. 6). Therefore, a cosmology inhabited by spirits and activated through visions, paranormal

experiences, and psi abilities would be considered as real – perhaps even more so – than psychopathological diagnostic categories. Yet, because this study is performed within the academic and scholarly discipline of psychology, shamanic cosmologies, spirit possession, and paranormal experience cannot be treated as empirical fact – regardless of what my own experience has shown me.

Nonetheless, in the selection and interpretation of data, a degree of researcher bias is inevitably present.

Conclusion

Do properties of some contemporary artists fulfill all, or some, necessary constructs defining *shaman*? Yes. Some contemporary artists, especially artists who are also members of traditional shamanic communities, are social designated spiritual practitioners who obtain information generally unavailable to members of their communities and use that information to benefit their communities and the members of the communities. These artists are both prototypical shamanic artists within the "Classical Set Shaman" and central members within the "Fuzzy Set Shaman."

In addition, contemporary artists who fulfill some, not all, defining constructs of *shaman* represent noncentral members within the "Fuzzy Set Shaman." Based on their family resemblance to shamanic artists, these non-central member artists may be described as shamanistic or shamanlike. Perhaps more precisely, many of these non-central artists represent artists who create with the intent of providing healing or other benefits.

To an extent, benefits received depend upon the talents and skills of the art audience members. Art audiences are not always ready to receive gifts given by artists.

Because of the many aspects of shamanism and artistry explored herein and the multiple sources of data, this study became a broad sweep of some major issues, a sketch on a wide canvas made with a broad brush, awaiting further development and possible confirmation from more narrowly focused future studies. While providing a foundation for future comparisons of contemporary artists to shamans, this study also discovered numerous patterns and clusters of similar traits that indicate important relationships between shamans and varying subsets of contemporary artists. Richards (personal communication, May 1, 2012) commented:

> A study of this breadth brings together many strands, and can suggest many future questions. It is precisely through its ambition and breadth that we find patterns appearing, a broad convergence of data, such that meaning can begin to manifest. Although one should not feel anything is definitively proven, there are strong suggestions for important associations—and ones that could help human wellbeing-- *within* broader categories we might call SHAMAN and ARTIST.

Between shamans and artists, this study found numerous overlapping similarities and associations. There appears to be a number of properties held in common by shamans, shamanic artists, and shamanistic or shamanlike artists, especially with regards to the intent to benefit members of the community or art audience. In addition, shamans, shamanic artists, and many shamanistic artists share some traits associated with transliminality and creativity. These populations also engage in spiritual practices, voluntarily regulate attention, discover and provide beneficial information. Indeed, the strongest similarity between shamans and subsets of shamanistic contemporary artists may be the intent to benefit others.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to:

- Provide a thorough, critical, historical literature review including reading original sources and providing alternate interpretations of texts;

- Use a cross-culturally validated and operationalized definition of *shaman* to structure systematic comparisons;
- Integrate substantial data on artist-shamans who are not part of the narrow European American/Western art history trajectory;
- Attempt to remedy the whole or partial exclusion of traditional artists, folk arts, and popular culture from certain disciplines;
- Integrate substantial quantity of data from creativity studies, with accurate representations of research findings from previous studies especially with regards to the multidirectional relationships between mental health, mental illness, artists, and creativity;
- Consider art audience experience as a way to determine if contemporary artists provide social, physiological, psychological, or spiritual benefits to others – including transparent descriptions of my own experiences;
- Create subsets of artists who fulfilled the defining constructs of *shaman* in partial or fragmentary ways;
- Offer a nuanced theoretical model that embraces the complex and multifaceted expressions of shamanism in artists, using a classical bounded category with prototypes as well as a fuzzy set with central members, noncentral members, and family resemblances.

Summary

This chapter reiterated how, in comparison with previous studies on contemporary artists as shamans, this study followed systematic, focused, explicit comparative and descriptive research methods. The study corrected errors in previous research designs

through operationalization of definientia as constructs, reviewing data from a greater span of time, integrating data representing more cultures, and utilizing data from creativity studies. The comparative process resulted in a nuanced theoretical model describing contemporary artists and shamanism, one that embraced prototypical shamanic artists from traditional shamanic cultures who fulfilled all defining constructs of *shaman* as well as artists who fulfilled the defining constructs in a partial, fragmentary way. Some artists may receive an implicit, tacit form of social designation from art audiences unfamiliar with shamans due to the benefits audiences can receive from works of art.

Mission and Commitment

This study's ultimate purpose is the application and utilization of knowledge, ideas, and models formed herein. By broadening and deepening the understanding of shamanic and shamanistic artists, I hope to contribute towards enhancing the value, status, function, and benefits of art in our society, supporting what Taylor (1959) conceptualized as *emergent* creativity, constructing systems of knowledge, beliefs, and practices from which a new school of art will emerge and flourish.

To accomplish this requires offering the research findings in multiple forms and styles of language accessible to different kinds of audiences. As Ruth-Inge Heinze (1991) understood, shamanic work must be communicated in an understandable form. In this regard, this dissertation's research is only one step in the journey.

I am committed to offering the research results in multiple styles and media to reach my targeted audiences of artists, art students, art audiences, art institutions, and scholars, with the intent of enhancing their abilities to engage in transformative shamanic creative processes that provide social, psychological, physiological, and spiritual benefits.

Here is Your Opportunity

Turn the page.

From: Artist

To:

Art Audience Member

1. Unwrap and identify parts.

Horses, horses, horses,

2. Put on your tap shoes and your dragon tattoo,

3. your tuxedo, your tiara,
4.
5. across nowhere, aimed to the concentric arena,
6. Arrive at the now here, just past the boundary around.
7. Remove the patent leather pair of distractions
8. before you cross the threshold.
9. Pay $3. Lift the paper chalice.
10. Drink the red wine.
11. Sit in the dark room.
12. Breathe and wait.
13. Gaze and see.
14. Listen and hear.
15. Beam of light focusing, shining from you. Brighter strengthening concentration.
16. The laser cutting through.
17. Through the opening enter an other realm of being.
18. Speak with the inhabitants, the unhabited beings.

20. Hear the news,

21. receive a psalm,

22. read the instruction manual for the soul.

23. Bid farewell your host in heaven.

24. Bid your gold to your host in hell.

25. Take your gifts.

26. Pet Cerberus as you climb the stairs.

27. Climb Jacob's smoldering ladder

28. and up Persephone's throne.

29. Turn left through the red velvet curtains and right into the hall.

30. Don’t invest in the banks of Mr. Csikszentmihalyi.

31. You can’t miss him. Yeh, he *looks* like a river but he’s never

Blue.

32. Join the streams of meaning flowing through your veins and synapses, flowing through history and ancestors, flowing across the foyer.
33. Past the bronze unknown soldier, take out your keys.
34. See stars afar shining, crying, guitars floating across the Milky Way.
35. Hear the cars, taxis, buses halt their shushing flow at your red red red light.
36. Feel the percussion of patent leather tap shoes on the crosswalk drum.
37. Turn your key in the lock amidst the stream of turning keys,
38. A river of locks unlocking, poems enfolding, clocks re-clocking.
39. Another opening, an other threshold through
40. the dark school zones, brick boundaries, arena of home.
41. The blanket boundary around bed
42. Your tired head on the weeping willow pillow
43. Unwrapping reveries wrapping gifts, undressing your lover
44. Listen

45. *the Body of Art whispers*
46. secrets
47. fletching arrows with feathers from its own wings
    as you sink through an opening in the floor –
    slowly into the rivers of
    sleep that flows into roots,
    into leaf veins,
        into streaming swans
            and soaring rivers of light

Yes.

Now you know, listener descending,
how your antlers grow,
sprouting leaf flames during gray transitions,
how your snaked transformations
paint with sunsets,
how owl-winged melodies compose with pebbles and
Blake's feared symmetries.

You live
in the veils of song prism mysteries;
tapestries woven of image fragments,
memories embroidered with leaf veins
and shards of Mozart's mirrors,
insights sown with Rapunzel's precious threads,
sprouting from Tolstoy's carved roots.

On the darkling stage, your shrapnel vase exploding,
exposing memories,
under theatre's fifth wall,
that veneer of tuxedoes and gowns,
Concealing bacchanalian revels and
blue horse revelations
inside your sweet skin.

You melt into,

blend with

your color catharsis kin.

My dear art audience, my companions in creativity,

you are the stage upon which art is danced,

the fire in which vases are formed,

where pages of tales are told,

and the potter's wheel turns.

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Appendix A

Qualifications of Researcher-Artist, Denita Benyshek

Formal Education

My formal arts education includes a Bachelor's of Fine Arts degree, Magna cum Laude with Honors in Painting, and a Master's of Fine Arts degree in painting, This education also involved numerous courses in art history, aesthetics, and literature. In addition to visual arts, I studied flute, piano, acting, directing, stagecraft, and dance (ballet, jazz, modern, and African/Caribbean techniques) as an undergraduate as well as postgraduate studies.

In the field of psychology, my education includes a Master's degree specializing in marriage and family therapy and a graduate certificate in creativity studies, both from Saybrook University. For several years, I attended workshops and seminars offered by the Carl Jung Society in Seattle, Washington.

Art Career

My artwork has been included in over 70 solo and group exhibits, including Redefining Visionary Art in New York City, curated by art critic, Suzi Gablik (1992, 2004). These institutions hold my artwork in their permanent collections: *Glassmuseet* (Glass Museum) in Ebeltoft, Denmark, University of Washington Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center, King County Ethnic Heritage Collection, and Wichita State University. The Ucross Foundation, the Pilchuck Glass School, and The Alfred G. and Elma M. Milotte Art Foundation are three, of many, organizations that supported my work.

I assisted Corwin Fergus (2005) in the filming of *Oil and Water: Reflections on Nature, Madness, and Psyche*, set in Prince William Sound after the tragic Exxon Valdez oil spill. My interviews with the people of Cordova, Alaska and with bird and animal rescue workers were published in *Season of Dead Water* (Benyshek, 1990).

Additional professional work in the arts encompassed directing plays, creating multi-media performance works, designing sets, creative writing, public art projects, collaborative work with composers, choreographers, and sculptors, and experience as an art instructor, including 3 years of university teaching and 6 years at a private art school. Over the course of 15 years, I taught visual arts, dance, and performance art in the isolated Native American villages in the Alaskan bush. As an artist-in-residence, I worked with Tlingit, Haida, Athabascan, Inupiak, Aleut, and Inuit peoples.

With a lifelong devotion to art making and extensive experience in a variety of media, I may speak as an expert. My training and teaching experience also supports my ability to serve as a translator of the languages of art for my readers.

Psychotherapy and Creativity Coaching

I am a trained and experienced diagnostician, with two years experience as a marriage and family therapist. In addition, I offer pro bono services as a coach in the creative process for artists with low incomes.

Art Audience

Through attending museums, galleries, operas, plays, films, music concerts, dance performances, festivals, reading novels and poetry, and much more, I gained insight into the deeply meaningful, creative experiences of the art audience.

Conference Attendance

I attended the International Conference on the Study of Shamanism and Alternate Forms of Healing in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011, contributing presentations in the last 3 years. Additional conference attendance included the 2008 conference for the Society of Shamanistic Practitioners, held near Santa Fe, New Mexico, and presentations at the International Society for Shamanistic Research 2009 conference in Anchorage, Alaska and 2011 conference in Warsaw, Poland focusing on "Shamanhood and its Art."

Through these organizations, I underwent profoundly moving shamanic healing rituals and learned from expert practitioners of traditional shamanism, including Tito la Rosa from Peru, Mandaza Augustine Kandemwa of Zimbabwe, Mayan shaman Aj Q'ij Tata Erick Gonzalez, and Rita Pitka Blumenstein, a Yupik elder and member of the International Council of Thirteen Indigenous Grandmothers.

Publications

My pilot study on contemporary artists as shamans will be published in a forthcoming issue of *ReVision: A Journal of Consciousness and Transformation* (Benyshek, 2012). Results from the same study, as well as a second pilot study on the art audience as shamanic community (Benyshek, in press-a), and a literature review on Western ideas regarding the artist as shaman (Benyshek, in press-b), will be included in volume 2, *Shamanism and Contemporary Arts*, as part of the 12 volume *Encyclopedia of Shamanism* published in China. A historical review on Western artists and shamanism will also be included in a forthcoming book published by the State Museum of Ethnography in Warsaw, Poland.

Appendix B

Recommendations for Future Research

Are first-degree relatives of shamans more likely to have bipolar or schizophrenia spectrum disorders and are these disorders associated with shamanic creativity?

Assess the creativity of shamans using the same instruments and methods that were used to assess creativity in eminent, artistic, and everyday creator populations. Are shamans a unique class of creators or do shamans fall into existing categories of creativity?

How are the families of shamans, shamanic artists, and shamanistic artists similar to or different from families that produce eminent, artistic, or everyday creators?

Did shamanic artists and shamanistic artists show signs of their motivation to heal or benefit others during childhood, either through forms of art or via other ways?

What is the association between childhood transliminality and the creativity of adult shamanic artists and shamanistic artists?

Do shamans experience transformation through creative disintegration and reintegration, gaining improved mental health through this process?

What personality traits are typically found in shamanic artists and shamanistic artists?

Does the generative stage of development typify shamans, shamanic artists, and shamanistic-artists?

Are there mentally healthy, high functioning shamanic artists or shamanistic artists that had psychopathological symptoms but through training and practice succeeded in transforming the symptoms and related experiences into beneficial contributions to

creative processes that resulted in superior mental health? What distinguishes such artists?

Are spiritual practices, intent to benefit others, and other elements of shamanism potential, or already functioning, moderating factors for shamanic artists and shamanistic artists?

What are the methods used by some geniuses, eminent creators, and artists to control primary process access?

What methods are used by the same populations to control and make beneficial use of psychosis or psychopathology? How does this compare to methods used by shamans for the same purposes?

Is there an important social role and function performed by mentally ill artists in Western society? Is Western society structured to increase the number of artists suffering from mental illness?

Can contemporary artists, who are not from traditional shamanic societies, learn from shamans how to control and use symptoms of mental illness as part of a creative, artistic, healing process that benefits others while also resulting in superior mental health for the artists?

In shamanic societies, how is mental illness distinguished from shamanic illness? Is the difference a matter of degree or strength of symptoms, or kinds of symptoms? Do shamanic artists and shamanistic artists experience shamanic illness followed by improved functioning and superior mental health, whereas artists without shamanic or shamanistic beliefs and practices more readily succumb to mental illness? Can learning shamanic beliefs and practices help mentally ill artists control their symptoms? What are

the roles of the art audience as well as the medical community in providing support for valuing, training, and utilizing the skills of shamanic artists?

How do dreams interpreted as callings to shamanism compare with dreams of contemporary artists? Are there similarities in the dream themes, symbols, and stories of both populations?

What kinds of experiences might indicate that a contemporary artist is being called to shamanism – if artists who are not members of shamanic communities can receive a calling to shamanism?

Can shamanic or shamanistic traits, beliefs, and practices improve mental health in artists who are not members of shamanic communities?

There remains a great need for strong emic perspectives, for the voices of traditional shamanic artists to explain their creative processes and for research on the families of shamanic artists.

The above ideas for future research are only suggestions, unexplored topics awaiting attention from researchers in many fields.

I welcome further dialogue on these ideas – and all topics addressed in this dissertation.

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